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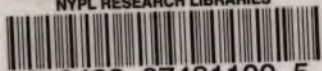
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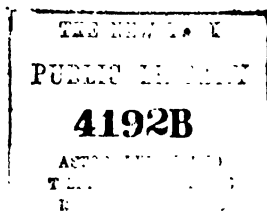
ADA CARTER

Author of "The Seamless Robe"



NEW YORK
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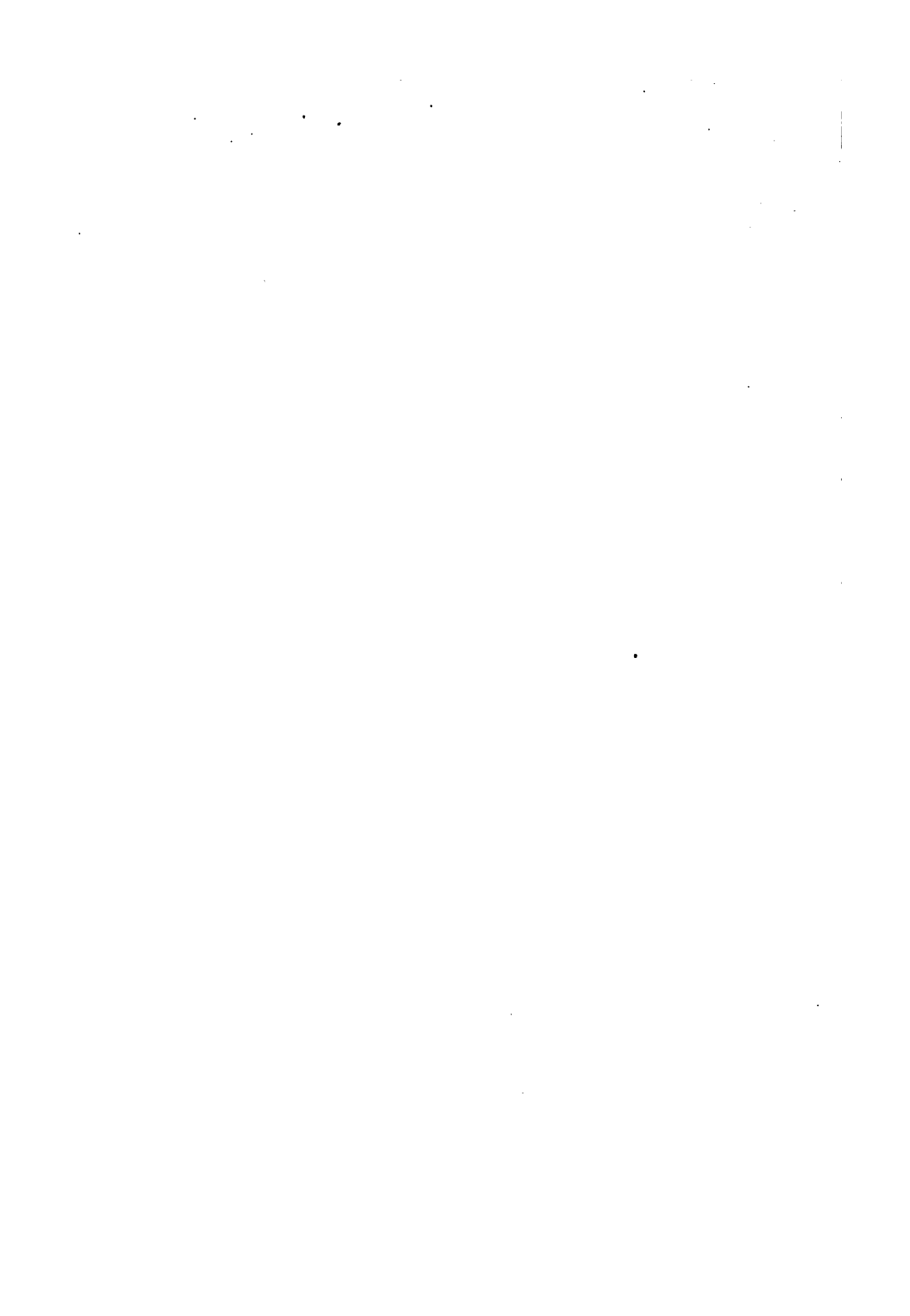


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March

"And God said . . . I AM: . . . This is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations:"—*Exodus*.

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PRIEST AND LAYMAN

"From En-gedi even unto En-eglaim."—EZEKIEL.

A traveler sat upon a sunny slope and held sweet flowers to her lips, when a voice fell on her ear and bade her journey on, nor rest so near the valley's depth.

"There is a narrow mountain pass," the speaker said, "that thou must tread, and further steep inclines to breast. Moreover there is a river thou must enter, but fear not when the waters rise, for I will cause thee to return."

She held her flowers with firmer hands. "I must know," she said, "the name and nature of the King you serve, ere I can listen to the message that you bring."

"His name and nature," he answered softly, "are written on thy chart of life and by a prophet's hand — 'the Lord our Righteousness.'"

Still she did not rise, for she knew that, once a pilgrim seeks to tread the narrow way, the lie will ever robe itself in stolen letters, made of light, and will use the name while knowing nothing of the nature of the King of Kings.

"Come."

The voice compelled her, and she rose and faced the one who stood beside her on that sunny slope. Facing

him, she knew at once that she might altogether trust this guide.

Now, though truly the way was straight and narrow, it seemed to her to lie downhill. The pilgrim paused and her guide discerned the doubt within her heart. "Thou hast yet to learn," he said, "to call nothing common or unclean. Long years ago One washed his servants' feet."

"I understand," she answered instantly, "that everywhere, even here and now upon the earth, our King must reign supreme, and every righteous act is dignified when seen in Mind."

Her task was done and she rested soon upon a hard uncushioned chair, while the sun shone through an open window by her side and kissed the flowers upon her breast, then dyed with light the bare brick floor till it became to her a crystal sea. Suddenly it seemed, as she gazed thereon, that she heard sweet harpers harping with their harps of gold, yet not for long might she rest, even now!

The guide stood by her side once more and bade her journey on again.

They stood together in a vast bare hall half filled with men and women, and many had babies in their arms. Some noticed the silent watcher looking on; none saw her guide at all. The pilgrim held the flowers closer to her heart and wrapped her robe quite over them.

Here were open pens, or so it seemed to her, and near each pen a high signpost, "Old Cases, Men," "New Cases, Women," and here, "New Cases, Men," "Old Cases, Women." But were these creatures men and women of her race? If so, where born, where bred?

The guide was gone, or so it seemed to her, and as

... ..

she turned to search for him she saw a sweet-faced woman by her side.

"It is," the woman said, "the morning for the skin disease. Come with me and I will show you pictures of the present and the past."

So that gentle sister led the traveler on through that bare hall, and up a wide stone stair. The air was filled with a human cry. She closed her eyes at the sight of a baby's face. What death in life was this? What horror of hell had poverty, dirt, disease, painted upon that baby's face? What cruelty of want had wrapped this child's young form in filthy rags, fit only for the fire?

The gentle sister stood now at the open door of a room quite filled with artificial light, and there the pilgrim saw those pictures of the present and the past. Men, women and little children lay prostrate, each upon a spotless couch, while a white-robed woman held full on each face a light so bright that it was hoped that it would burn away the skin disease.

"Here is a record of the past," and one held forth a picture in her hand. "You see, the scars alone are left."

Troubled at heart the traveler turned away, searched for and found her guide; then whispered in his ear, "Surely I have seen enough."

At the door she stayed her steps and bade the sweet-voiced sister with the angel face a sorrowful farewell, while she disclosed the flowers upon her breast.

The sister smiled with kindly eyes, and pity in her glance. "Thank you," she said with gentle courtesy, "we already have enough."

"But these," the pilgrim pleaded, "are unlike yours."

Each has its individual nature, name and growth, yet all are surnamed . . . Truth."

"Thank you," she said, with sterner courtesy, "we do not need them here," and slowly closed the door.

The guide stood by the pilgrim's side again, for the door had shut him out as well. From the wide stone gallery they looked upon those piteous pens half filled with their stock of human flesh and blood, and the traveler knew that the vast hall below their feet scarce held the worth of a healthy sheep or cow, for everywhere was the skin disease. She breathed a silent prayer, that the Christ would reign there in their midst and heal them every one; and she thought of that sweet-voiced sister with the angel face and of the noble men who lead this brave campaign, and prayed that God would shower rich blessings on every consecrated head and help them heal the sick, for what more can man or woman do than the best which they see to be done? What more can any man do than lay down his life for his friends?

.

They passed now through a wide clean thoroughfare, the broadest street, they told the pilgrim, in that land. She stayed her steps and gazed at the crowd, for all was new to her. One they called a Jewess walked quickly by, another, and another. Then she saw a woman cross the road holding a child by either hand. Her dress was gaudy in its coloring and soiled from waist to hem, while her face was less intelligent than that of a mongrel cur, and yet — of her own race, an Englishwoman born and bred! Dear God, that it should be so! And that other who faced her now — all wrinkled and bent before her time with the tur-

moil and toil of her terrible life, her garments all mitered around the hem, not by scissors or needle and thread, but by the ages' wear and tear.

Where was her guide? Had he left her there on that highroad to find her way alone?

Nay, he stood beside her even now.

"Look," he said, "on the sunny slope whereon I found you yesterday."

She looked, and lo! the wide thoroughfare lay far down in the valley's depth, while the slope whereon she once had thought to rest was but a lowland plain.

"Ah!" she answered softly, "at last I understand. Yes, we have journeyed uphill all the time, though it seemed to me you led me to the valley's heart."

The pilgrim leaped upon a great bold rock and lifted her lips to drink of the sun. The mountain breezes blew on her face and form, while she sought her flowers and found them gone.

"See!" The guide was close beside her still and pointed to the ground whereon he stood. "See, these flowers are as beautiful, as fragrant and robust, and you have won them for your own. Each mountain pass is straight, if steep, and you have all the time been traveling up and on."

She thanked her guide with a throbbing heart and bathed his feet in her tears.

"Rise," he quickly said, "for man must worship God and God alone."

The traveler rose and stood before her guide.

"How could I doubt," she said with faltering voice, "that thou wouldst lead me uphill all the way, though the path whereon we trod seemed to drag me to the earth and take me lower than I had ever been before."

"Thy life," he answered gently, "was haunted by a poisoned dread of that poverty and pain which beset the path of mortal man, yet from which thou didst ever dread to draw the veil. Now thou hast learned the mighty truth, that when a lie has lurked for long it needs to be uncovered to the individual heart that fears to face it fully and see it in its falsity, for thus only can it really be destroyed."

"I have learned," the pilgrim answered softly, "that they who rest their hand in thine may walk the seething seas of sinful sense and know them for the lie they are, nor fear to sink beneath the wave."

"Rest here a while," he gently said, "in silent commune with thy King, and drink deep draughts from the fount of Love."

Now she stood alone upon the sunny slope amid the flowers that she had won, and read a "little book" that lay wide open in her hand: thus she obeyed and drank deep draughts from the fount of Love and thought of the prophet's lay, "And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations," and she knew in her heart that the time was at hand.

She lifted her lips and drank of the sun, while the sweet mountain breeze blew on her hair and bathed in its freshness her face and form; and into her heart there stole a great peace, for it was fast filled with the knowledge of Good and that holy calm which follows the storm of a lesson well learned. Thus did she prove the all-presence of God; for thus did she learn that a lie unveiled by the Truth cannot even seem to be true.

• • • • • • •

Once more was her guide beside her.

"Daughter," he said, "hast thou seen this?"

The traveler looked, and lo! it was beside a mighty stream that she stood, and her clothes were wet with the waters thereof, while on the banks of that great river were trees of a wondrous growth. On this side and on that they grew and gave forth fadeless leaves for medicine, while their fruit was perpetual food for man, for it could not be consumed, because these waters issue from the sanctuary, and, where they come, they heal and make all things to live, save that which is "given to salt."

CHAPTER I

"THIS IS THE DREAM"

HAD he ever before known the day to be so hot? Richard Gray questioned. An occasional sound reached him and startled him as it did so, for it came as something altogether apart from the extraordinary quiet of his surroundings. Each time it was the same sound and it was not a pleasant one for a man such as this to hear. The sensitive face, ruddy hair and happy eyes belonged to a temperament which naturally hates the evil and looks persistently for the good, and which turned involuntarily from the contemplation of the dreary outlook in front of him.

Mr. Gray rose hastily from the cane lounge upon which he had been resting, slipped on his flannel coat and walked quickly towards a tent which was pegged down about three hundred yards away, but equally suddenly he stopped and retraced his steps.

"What use?" he muttered. "He will let me speak, of course, but he will not really listen. I cannot save him if he will not hear."

That unpleasant laugh. It reached him more clearly now and brought to his face a vivid flush that burned red on his fair skin.

The Rev. Richard Gray had but recently landed in this large island in the South Pacific, and so far was not tanned by the climate, as was the case with other white

men, to a workaday red or brown, nor was he yet hardened by the low moral tone around him to a workaday cynicism which should make him heedless of the needs of a little child.

"Morning, Mr. Gray."

"Doctor, have you just come from there?" Richard Gray threw his arm roughly out in the direction of the tent.

"Yes." The man drawled his answer. He was obviously a half-caste. His mellow voice, coarse smile and lazy bearing bespoke the land of his birth; a land wherein is a vast though widely spread population; a land where man knows but little, and scarcely desires to know more; a land where the ground remains untilled and the stagnant marsh is unreclaimed, where the low scrub affords no shelter from the burning sun; a land where, in the forest, the vegetation runs riot and becomes impassable to the foot of man, for there the sinuous creeper curls and coils its length from lowest undergrowth to highest branch, thus forming a network which more than holds its own against the ax in the white man's hands, defeating his efforts of a day by its vigorous growth of a single night. Foul ponds have collected throughout the ages in this land of sleep and sloth, and from their slimy surface a perpetual poison emanates. Some are more than ponds — large tracts of treacherous bog covered with a growth so like that which carpets the more solid ground that the white man who seeks to thread his way through this little-known land had best hold closely to his black brother's hand or he may find his feet held in the bog and realize, when it is too late, that hours of unspeakable pain lie before him, the sun pouring down upon

the brow of one unaccustomed to its burning rays, the pestilential stench of thousands of years rising and penetrating the system through the unwilling nostril.

Such was the country in which Richard Gray stood to-day side by side with the half-caste.

Dr. Froebel leaned lazily against the trunk of a slender tree whose delicate leafage gave no shelter, being scarcely more substantial than its falling plumes of pale mauve blossom.

"Yes, I have been there." The man spoke laconically and wiped his face with the sleeve of his white cotton shirt. "Gordon's child will live in spite of wishes that kill."

Mr. Gray turned abruptly and faced the speaker. "How dare you, Dr. Froebel, say such things? You cannot read another's heart and," he added sternly, "you have no right to surmise in such a matter as this." He was about to say more, but checked himself.

His companion smiled tolerantly and moved slowly off towards a low hut which lay close by upon his right, but, though it was so near, to reach it Dr. Froebel knew he must make a long detour in order to avoid the thin stretch of swamp which lay between him and the roughly piled logs, named in this case, "English Jim's Palace." A woman rested there—a beautiful Creole, who held upon her breast a tiny babe whose skin was as fair as hers was dark, though its eyes and abundant crop of hair were the color of a raven's wing.

The man Froebel glanced back towards the tent he had lately left.

"All parson rot," he muttered as he walked away.

and remembered Mr. Gray's stern face. "George Gordon means to hump the swag and pad the hoof before he's a day older, and he'll leave the brat to fish for itself. I know, for I hear the fever prattle while the parson stays at home prating his silly prayers; and that was a badish go of fever Gordon had last month."

The Rev. Richard Gray, left alone, strode swiftly away until he reached the log hut which at the moment served him as a home. It was a small building and very primitive, but it sheltered him as much as might be from the cruel heat of the climate. Hastily collecting a few necessary articles, he dropped them into a canvas satchel which he wore and immediately started off upon the up-country journey he had already planned. The big-hearted young missionary was full of zeal, and his health was extraordinary, but then Richard Gray did not, at this time of his life, meet difficulties half-way, for he seemed to have a natural aptitude for turning even the darkest clouds about in order that he might view their silver lining. He lost nothing thereby. This deliberate looking for good is not a habit to be despised, for it is apt to keep the body strong and full of rich pure blood.

A man standing at the door of the tent which Mr. Gray had indicated when speaking to the half-caste watched the young missionary's departure furtively. He knew his goal and how long to an hour it would take him to reach it and start down-country again, and he, George Gordon, had much to do before Mr. Gray, with his alert glance, high morality and powerful physique should return. He was in fact the person whom Gordon at the moment feared most. He feared him for a reason as old as is the allegory of sin; he was evil

and knew Richard Gray to be good. Now as always the evil cries out to the good and sometimes cries aloud, "Art thou come hither to torment us?"

An hour later Gordon stood beside a heap of dried leaf and fern upon which sat a young woman with two infants in her lap, under the shelter of the large hut to which the half-caste had gone.

"As alike as peas in a pod," he muttered as he looked upon them. "Most brats of a week old are, I suppose, unless one has white hair and the other black."

The Creole held his own child out to him and he took it for a moment in his arms. His wife had put the fine stitches into the cambric clothes and he identified the infant by them and, at the moment, by them alone. Both babes were small, both were quite fair of skin and black of hair, both had eyes like summer sloes. English Jim would be glad enough that his brat had turned out fair, instead of dark as his Spanish mother. Why had the man married this Creole girl, who now held both children in her arms again? James Young would have answered, "Because she loved me better than anyone in the world had ever done before." But George Gordon could not understand such speech as that and James Young was not there to make it.

Mr. Gordon left the hut as abruptly as he had entered it. Two days later he stood in the office of the only lawyer in the coast town of Zanzinna. The heat in the small room was appalling. A mess of "sling" or molasses was smeared upon a rough board and large house flies found their last home upon its sticky surface. A piece of gaudy muslin covered the unclean window-

pane. It was carelessly hung and very dirty, but it served its purpose and effectually prevented anyone who might chance to pass down this narrow back street from seeing into the office of Joseph Trott. The lawyer had no wish to be spied upon. His clever face was also an evil one, and his business would not always bear the scrutiny of close inspection.

"Here you are," he said, handing Mr. Gordon a document. "The cash will be sent to me direct, and this day month we may be able to square up; it's lucky for you she died before she carried out her intention of appointing a trustee. Being the boy's natural guardian you can do as you like with the oof; we'll talk about my share when the mail gets in next month. Say," he added suddenly, "did you run up against an Englishman named Jim Young — English Jim or the Duke they called him when I was up there in the West Creeks? He was so damned poor and so careful about his hands. He would not soil them for any doubtful job, not for any amount of tin."

Joseph Trott laughed but George Gordon was silent. The latter knew Jim Young well and knew moreover just where he was to be found at that moment, but he was not in the habit of giving anything for nothing; he must know what his information was worth to the man who demanded it, before he would part with a single grain.

For an hour or more the two men talked, and though their voices were low the black boy who stood on duty in the front office could hear almost everything, for his ear was held close to the keyhole to-day, although sometimes it had happened that an unwary client, getting angry, had spoken loud enough for him to make

out every word without such effort. This morning he was in luck. This was the more pleasing to him because he saw by Mr. Gordon's face, as he passed through the outer office just as the ship's gun fired the mid-day hour, that the shady business which had just been arranged was of great importance. Sam was jubilant; he must watch the game. He meant one day to take a mighty revenge upon Joseph Trott for the kicks, the cuffs and the vile vituperations which he, Sam, had endured for over a year, ever since, in fact, he had been handed over to Mr. Trott to act as his general factotum and veritable slave.

Thus does evil breed its own destruction, and, always stupid and purblind, regard as slave that which one day will prove itself the master. So let us not linger here. The true humanitarian uncovers the error that besets his path with unhesitating hand, but only in order to destroy its seeming power, looking forward the while with eager eye to the day when the whole world shall wake to a knowledge of its nothingness. Meanwhile, the one who would exterminate builds up, if he puts this same “uncovering” foremost or gives a paramount importance to that which should be merely incidental.

CHAPTER II

MERELY THE DREAM AND NOTHING MORE

GEORGE GORDON'S eyes glowed as he left the town and made his way rapidly towards the wild country. He knew where to find Jim Young, but he also knew that, if the information which the carriers, the brothers Aigre, had given him of English Jim two days ago was correct, he must find him quickly or this wonderful gold-mine which the hand of Joseph Trott had opened at his feet would prove of no more practical value than dead men's bones.

He knew the country well and was one of those men who do not tire easily, if their goal be one that they themselves desire to reach.

Thirty-six hours later he stumbled over the body of a sleeping black as he forced his way through a belt of thick undergrowth. It was one of the brothers Aigre, quite helplessly drunk. A great tree, covered with its abundant foliage, towered above his head. He glanced around for the man's twin brother. These men, Abdul and Benjamin Aigre, were better known than any natives in the island, and, until he had learned to love brandy and the home-brewed "shrub" better than his second self, the elder twin had been the stronger man of the two and the most trustworthy messenger in Cin; but conversion to the white man's method of

life had meant for poor Abdul Aigre an hourly descent into a state of degradation.

In his excitement at seeing the very man whom he most wished to see George Gordon lost control of himself. Kicking the prostrate body he shouted for Benjamin Aigre. He must be there or thereabouts. For a lifetime the twins had moved as one man. No one, it was constantly declared, had ever seen them apart, and together they had earned a good living for the last thirty years as carriers from the seaport of Zanzinna on the south coast across the island to the extreme north. The brothers Aigre had what amounted to a monopoly of a certain kind, for they could thread the interior at all seasons of the year and many hidden tracks, secret to their use, remained a sealed book to the enterprising European and even to the half-caste, as also to the native of the country.

George Gordon shouted again but could neither see nor hear anything of Abdul Aigre's brother. With another wanton kick at the inert figure of the helpless man he turned and sought a resting-place in the deep concavity formed by giant creepers which wound themselves around the vast girth of the tree beneath which he stood. It was dark now and he would wait here for Benjamin. The latter could not be far off and his aid was worth waiting for because, quite certainly, he could shorten Gordon's journey up country in search of English Jim, and thereby much valuable time could be saved. Better risk a few hours now and secure Benjamin Aigre as his guide than waste some days by following the well-known, but much longer, route which was his only alternative course if left to himself. The moon would soon emit a light bright as that of

day and George Gordon was glad, for his onward march, he knew, would lie through a wide belt of forest. Every moment during the last twelve hours he had left the open country further behind him and the vegetation had consequently become more dense. Up to this point it had mattered very little to him, for he knew his way well as far as the Five-forked Tree beneath which he now rested.

His spirits rose high. All his thinking life he had felt that nothing in the world would ever make him happy except the possession of a great deal of money. Ever since the day upon which he, then a mere child, had purloined a silver and a copper coin from the plate as it lay upon the vestry-table awaiting his uncle's leisure and the attention of the village churchwarden, he had quite consciously longed to be rich. He did not yet know himself or human nature well enough to realize that, his condition of mind being engendered by greed, no amount of that for which he hungered would ever satisfy the carnal appetite that always craves for more. He had married solely in order to become rich, but still not content he had then done that which, had it been discovered, even the world would have dubbed dishonest. He had done it deliberately, hoping thereby to increase his wealth, but instead his action had resulted in the loss of his wife's fortune. He had then attempted to obtain the control of the last of her possessions, but to his amazement had been met by persistent refusal on her part and the declaration that she would save, if at the eleventh hour, all she could for her new-born babe. With this refusal on her lips she had died.

Now, George Gordon thought only of himself and

had no moment of regret for the immoral past. Yet it was scarcely a year ago that his young bride in the first flush of her married life had placed her hand in his and trusted him with her all; but very soon callous cruelty had unmasked her husband's heart and laid bare to her the greed which nothing it seemed could ever satisfy.

To-night Mr. Gordon's thoughts were full of eagerness and hope. If he could pull off this big thing which he and Trott had planned together he would be the master of a large income for many years to come.

The moon must now be up, but either the night was cloudy or he had penetrated the forest where the branches of the acacia-tree were interlaced with those clad with a denser foliage, for he could not see his hand distinctly. It was well that he had decided to wait for Benjamin Aigre, for he knew that here he might easily take a wrong turn and thus waste precious time. George Gordon was apt to act quickly and many better men had envied his ability to grasp a situation and bring a difficult matter through with a celerity that left them far behind, but he also possessed a quality which is much more scarce and with which few would have credited him—he could upon occasion play a wonderful waiting game and with an apparent patience that would have gone far towards making him a great man, had it been the patience of the true philosopher instead of the watchful wisdom of the worldly egotist. He displayed this patience now. It mattered enormously to him that he should find, as soon as possible, the Englishman of whom he was in search, for, if his information was correct, Jim Young had not many days to live. Mr. Gordon was so cautiously constituted that

he easily risked some hours of delay until the daylight should help him to strike his exact road or bring Benjamin Aigre to his side, rather than court the possibility of making a fatal mistake by losing himself in a part of the forest that was unfamiliar to him. So he waited quietly enough in the notch formed by tree and creeper and looked for the dawn which should rush with some suddenness through the branches above his head. The mystery of the wide wood was nothing to George Gordon; the concrete only had held his thought and ruled his life.

It was extremely hot and the mosquitoes were sufficient in number and poisonous enough of sting to draw from him an occasional angry curse, but for the most part he sat quite still while a wonderful revel among the flesh-pots of Egypt opened out before his mental vision. MONEY. The word was written large and often upon the deep shadow of that early morning. A few more minutes and it would be light enough for him to awaken Abdul Aigre and ascertain his brother's whereabouts, always supposing that Abdul had, during the hours of the night, slept off the heavy stupor of his drunken bout.

All at once the day was upon him and George Gordon's glance left the thick leafage above his head and fell upon the ground where his feet had rested throughout the night. Instantly, as though by no volition of his own, he stood for a second upright, then fled through the thick undergrowth as the man flees who believes that no other chance of life remains for him save that of the swiftest flight. Furiously he rushed forward, once striking his shoulder smartly against the knotted roughness of a giant creeper many times interlaced;

almost falling at another time as he stumbled upon a dead branch which lay entirely hidden beneath the rank weeds here running riot upon every side. At last, because he could go no farther, he stopped and fell upon the earth. He must rest awhile. Good runner though he always had been he was for the time being quite used up. He lay upon his face just as he had dropped with that last painful breath. Later, he rolled upon his back and waited in a semi-conscious state till he should be himself again. His eyes were shut and yet he lifted his arms and flung his hands the one upon the other over the tightly closed lids. He must shut out the thing which still called to him to look upon it, though against his will. George Gordon shuddered now from head to foot and once he moaned. For hours he lay there amid the dense vegetation of a wild untrodden country still fleeing in thought from that from which he had so furiously fled in very deed.

The carnal mind is made of complex contradictions and this man, fearless enough in some respects because callous, had yet for years been haunted by a peculiar terror. Should he ever erase from his mind the spectacle which the early dawn had that day revealed to him? He forgot everything else in the world now — forgot the rosy future which he had in imagination sketched for himself during those hours of patient waiting, and remembered only that he had spent those hours within a foot of the brothers Aigre whom the daylight had immediately exposed to his full view. As though he had been present he seemed to know exactly what had occurred. For fifty years the twins, whom he had seen both hale and hearty only three days before, had been known in the island of Cin as inseparable.

arable. For over thirty years they had been trusted above the common, for together they could go where no one else would venture. They knew paths through the jungle that no other man had ever threaded, and, always together, they had made forced marches in order to earn the European gold that was usually to be had when a despatch must be carried rapidly across the island or from busy seaport to inland rubber merchants. Then, as George Gordon knew, quite suddenly the elder twin had become a debauchee. There seemed nothing more to be said about it. He had tasted spirits one day, when over fifty years of age, and had never been really sober since. Still the brothers were never apart. With a miserable pathos, the younger twin watched over the elder and sought to save him. Nothing had ever been of any importance, nothing could ever be of any importance, except that which they had done, or should do, together.

George Gordon had met the twins as he entered the town of Zanzinna three days before. The younger had told him the news of Jim Young which had subsequently proved to be of great moment, and then pointing to his brother Abdul, "You white men," he said miserably, "make the poison, can't you cure the madness?"

Then Mr. Gordon had laughed; now he trembled as he lay upon the jungle grass and remembered what he had seen at daybreak that morning. He had then looked upon both Abdul and Benjamin Aigre again. An hour ago was it or a life time? The poison had led to madness and the madness, it would seem, had led to death. The twins would no more carry despatches together; the wonderful paths which they had threaded no one else would thread. And they! . . . George

Gordon shuddered and rolled again upon his face. Suddenly his hand stole towards his breast pocket. He wore only the lightest clothing, yet he lay there feeling as though weighted to the earth. He hesitated for fully a minute and then withdrew his hand with a fierce imprecation. No! After the poison — madness. After the madness — death. No! With the haste of a man who acts quickly because fearful that otherwise he may not act at all, he shot his right hand again into the breast pocket of the drill coat he wore and drew something swiftly out. Suddenly rising upon his knee, he brought the hand that now held a flask of cognac as far back as a lithe man may and flung the silver bottle with all his force into the heart of the jungle which lay before him. His eyes were closed as the flash of bright metal left his fingers and shot through the air. He sighed as he heard the noise of a hard substance falling upon the earth and realized that the poison was beyond his reach for many hours to come. The tragedy away there beneath the Five-forked Tree was still wet upon the broad petals of the forest lily, and such men as George Gordon are apt to be violent in their recoil from, as swift in their return to, that which alternately repels and attracts them. The twins had loved each other and only each other, so said both young and old in the island of Cin, for over fifty years yet — Mr. Gordon trembled again as he thought of those hours of darkness which had preceded the sudden dawn, for through all that night he had unwittingly lain cheek by jowl with the fratricide. After the poison — madness! After the madness — death! For many years George Gordon fled from the memory of that question which the younger twin had put to him three

days before his death: "You white men make the poison, can't you cure the madness?"

Now, throughout the early morning, the sound of a shaken leaf frightened Gordon. He fled when none pursued, and he knew it. Yet he fled, though it was, as he was well aware, not a human voice but a rising gale which shrieked, or so it seemed, horrid imprecations from every leaf and bough. Well, the country was at last more open here and he breathed freely once again. It was an attack of that rare weakness which occasionally overmasters the usually strong. Almost all his life he had been afraid of alcohol and had shrunk in terror from its effects upon the mind. Thirty years ago a half-wild man, whom people called his uncle, had rushed upon him in his nursery and had behaved as men sometimes do behave the day before they leave the comparative freedom of medical supervision for the high stone walls that are to form the boundary of their future perhaps for years, perhaps until they die. The horror of that hour would still at times return upon George Gordon. His mother's white face and bitter words were an indelible memory implanted in the mind of a sensitive child, and later he had heard his uncle called an evil name. Among the many nationalities, breeding many different customs, that were to be found in the town of Zanzinna, as well as in the interior of the island of Cin, Mr. Gordon was regarded as an abstemious man, and only he himself knew that it was simply a deadly fear which stayed his hand when others took a second "split."

Yet what was it that George Gordon feared? A fate much stronger than himself? What then in very truth is man? A helpless mechanism governed by the

carnal mind, or — the grandest work of God, endowed with a power from on high sufficient to meet and master every foe? Let us not mistake, as the world is apt to do, the unreal for the real. Let us not for a single moment attribute power to that which, when rightly comprehended, is proved to have no power at all. In reality one power alone exists and still reigns supreme in the heart that owns its sway. One law alone compels obedience — the law of justice and of love.

CHAPTER III

THE SAME

AN hour ago George Gordon had reached the plantation which had chiefly been English Jim's home of late. The sick man still lived and was sufficiently conscious to realize fully that the news that his friend brought him had come too late. He, James Young, would never handle the money for want of which he had left his native country years ago, for want of which he had attempted to seek a livelihood in this little-known land. He further realized that he would never again see the beautiful Creole whom he had loved honestly enough, as a man loves that which ministers carefully to his creature comforts.

"My love to Lola," he said, while a smile played round his mouth—a mouth sweet as that of a loving woman, weak as that of a little child. "I am glad it is a boy and that he will have the money which I have needed all my life. I wish—" he slept for a minute then spoke again. "If only the money had come before. If only the money had come before. Six years ago I . . . I," he slept again, longer this time, then lived for a moment the life of his early manhood. "Marry me, Gwendolen," he pleaded, "marry me, my dear, and see if I do not make you happy, rich or poor. After all," he spoke with passion now, for the fever rose in his veins and filled his eyes with sudden

fire while the memory of a girl's proud face and jeweled breast was strong upon him, so that he leaped upon his bed and stood there for a moment with his arms apart and a man's great longing in his heart. "After all," he sobbed, "love is a better thing than money, sweetheart, love is a better thing than money. Let us prove it, Gwendolen; let us prove it to our world." And so this weak and kindly Englishman died as he had lived, "as one that beateth the air."

He had planned no future for his child, last remnant of an outworn stock, who lay upon the bosom of his Creole wife down there by the Lower Creek and he died now with the name of that other woman on his lips — a woman who had always loved — first and last and only — herself.

George Gordon did all that it seemed necessary for him to do. There were the natives who served English Jim and, ten miles away, the French missionary. He need not wait. Indeed he would not wait, for a ghastly fear possessed him. He had met Lola on his way up-country, just as he left the forest land through which he had sped his steps so swiftly. A very slight détour had given him a second glimpse of Jim Young's wife with her baby and his own son, both within her arms. Once more he had noted how alike the child of one man may be to that of another while infancy holds both within its indefinite embrace. Lola had wept. Her child, she said, was pining with the heat and her heart broke because Jim Young so long delayed to come. So George Gordon knew that he must hasten his steps and reach the Lower Creek as soon as might be, for English Jim's child *must not die*. He had never wished anyone to live so much in all his life before. If he

could make a forced march and arrive at the settlement in ten hours, he would be in time to take the child away from Zanzinna when the s.s. *Crocodile* should leave port with her cargo. He would have to remove the boy from Lola's care unless she chose to travel with him to the town where a good doctor could be found and the steamer boarded. They must take the infant from this flat country, away from the tropical heat and the dangers of the rains. English Jim's child must live, for George Gordon was its sole guardian now and sole trustee of the large fortune which had come years too late to bring to James Young the white hand and shallow heart of the woman for whose love he had never ceased to crave.

Mr. Gordon was accustomed to sustained activity and the distance he had already traveled on foot had tired him but slightly. Since his arrival he had eaten and rested, so that when he had once started upon his return journey he settled immediately into a steady stride. He had many miles to go and the darkness would soon descend upon him. Thick clouds hung low and his knowledge of the climate assured him that no moonlight would reach the one who traveled through the bush that night. Young oleanders barred his path just here, and with their willowy strength defied the hand that sought to break a way through their tough growth. A many-thorned and rampant briar threw its cruel length upon the earth and ensnared his feet at every step. Yet this was by far the shorter way. He was sure of that, for he had found it weeks ago when the undergrowth was young and less hard to master. He had then tracked the brothers Aigre with an exultant glee for he had discovered one of their most secret trails, a

trail worth money not only to the brothers but to any who should find and use it, for a man could thereby carry a despatch from north to south across the island well within the month and thus catch a returning mail, while another man must skirt the coast and hug an ever-winding road.

George Gordon sang aloud. All had gone so well. Soon the night would be upon him, but no matter, by that time he would have left this wild bush country and be back upon the open track. He must indeed reach the Middle Creek before ten hours should pass or his whole journey might be fraught with failure. He must catch the s.s. *Crocodile* before she left the port, for there would be no other boat for a month or more. The deadly rains were already overdue and Jim Young's ailing child might die, if left at the mercy of the steaming heat of this marshy land.

George Gordon sang aloud. Then he paused for a moment and ate rough nibs of chocolate which he carried in his coat. Just here above his head was a wild orange-tree. The fruit, he knew, was bitter but as juicy as the lime. He allowed himself just long enough to snatch and break a bough then plucked an orange from it as he sped along, then another and another, till he tossed the now empty branch behind him as he ran upon his path. In a moment he would leave this kindly soil and must travel through the wilder jungle; then across a treacherous bog. But he knew his way; he had made a mental note of certain clear landmarks and his memory he could trust. Yes, he could catch that steamer easily. And the stake for which he played was very high. Yes, he would embark upon the *Crocodile*, with Lola or without, just as the case might be,

but certainly his ward should leave the island no matter what the Creole mother said. He threw the last ripe fruit away from him, for he had eaten enough, and now he must master that which Abdul Aigre had named "The Devil's Dance." Once this maze of jungle and the wild morass beyond was crossed, all would be a summer holiday.

Peste! It was hot. He would have liked that orange now. The vermin which attack the white found him out. The bloodsuckers meant to feast their fill upon him, it would seem, and he knew that he could not hope for freedom from them till some friendly hand should come his way. The mosquito too was large and venomous, and pursued him as he hastened through the bush and sought the near side of the great morass. How wide this belt of jungle seemed to be. Would he never reach the other side? This path, cut only by the onward march of the wild beast, was quite untrodden by the foot of man, save that the brothers Aigre had used it when they would. Marsh-birds rose with a dismal cry and flew away when he approached, as though distrustful of his presence there. For was it not most strange to them? Quite suddenly George Gordon felt an overwhelming sense of dread descend upon him. Was this indeed the path that he should follow? Could he, in his haste, have lost his way? He wished those wild marsh-birds would not make so swift a flight. Even the slimy reptiles at his feet seemed to hasten as they crawled away from him.

How fearful the heat had now become! And could a mortal bear the pain caused by the poison of these devilish insect bites? Here wide channels crossed and recrossed the great morass, for he had threaded the

jungle now and stood upon the northern bank. He must go forward cautiously, treading just where the brothers Aigre had trod. One wrong footstep would certainly result in hours of delay and might lead to something worse than that. As George Gordon thought of what might happen should he lose his way out here upon "The Devil's Dance," he became for a second almost breathless; for should he miss the boat and should the young infant die, upon whose frail life his own future wealth depended, his whole existence would be ruled by the poverty that he hated; whereas, could he obtain, as he had every hope of doing, a legal recognition of his guardianship, the care of so rich a ward would yield him a veritable fortune during the boy's long minority. Nothing else had ever been of so much importance to Gordon before, and such men as he are apt to condense important happenings into a few eventful years.

That was surely the tree under which he had watched the brothers resting two months ago. Yet now that he turned and regarded the jungle from which he had just emerged, it seemed quite unfamiliar to him. A two months' growth stared him in the face and he could not recognize, though he scanned the landscape with an eye made more keen by his great anxiety, a huge mangrove-tree which he had marked the day he tracked the twins. Yet surely it was just there that he had watched them seat themselves upon that fallen bough, while they ate the young corn and plantain from which they had made their early morning meal. The repast finished, they had, he remembered, stood talking for a moment and then taken a sharp turn to the left and dived once more into the bush. *But was it to the left*

that they had turned? Mr. Gordon stood nearly motionless. *Was it to the left that they had turned?* One minute earlier he would have declared that every landmark was indelibly imprinted on his brain. Now he was confused and asked himself which was his way across this great morass? Had the heat which beat down on his head caught him there upon the nape of the neck, where the wide brim of his pith helmet was all too short? He trembled now, for his situation insisted that he should contemplate it. He, a white man, had ventured alone upon a journey through a tract of country quite untraveled even by the natives of the island. The stench from the decayed vegetation and the evil-smelling fungus was pungent and poisonous and became suddenly offensive to him. The heat was such as Gordon had never before experienced, and he, a European, was here and utterly alone upon "The Devil's Dance." He knew himself to be not many miles away from safety—the junction where the one rough road of the country that led from the coast into the interior made a wide *détour* in order to avoid this swamp. It could not be more than a dozen miles away, but of what use was that? Should he once lose himself, as well might those twelve miles number a hundred; and now he remembered many things that he had heard since bringing his young wife from Zanzinna to the Lower Creek a month ago, ghastly tales which will bear no repetition upon these pages—tales to which he had listened merely as the idler listens, but to which he had not consciously paid any heed. Now it seemed to him that he remembered every syllable that he had heard connected with "The Devil's Dance." Stories there were of the convicts who fled the dungeons of Zanzinna

only to die upon the great morass; stories of men, who, having missed their way, had reached their town or settlement at last, but not till maddened by the fear of the awful death they had but narrowly escaped. And one other tale, the worst of all, told of a white man like himself who had been seen slowly to die, while his helpless comrades watched him from the firmer ground but could find no footing in the slime, nor send him any aid. Three days and three nights, the story went, that Englishman had lived and shouted almost all the time for help.

Was it to the left the brothers Aigre had turned? He must know which way their feet had trod and he must know it soon. Shortly now the twilight would be here and then utter darkness till the morning's dawn. Gordon knew that he could not calmly face those hours alone. Moreover, in his haste, he had started without due provision for a journey as long as his now threatened to become. Worse still, he had no water left. To touch the stagnant liquid which lay in slimy pools about his path was certain death. To retrace his steps was now not possible, for night was near at hand and all his landmarks had been taken while he journeyed southwards as he tracked the brothers moving towards the coast. To work up country would be to face for the first time each landmark from a different point of view. Ordinarily he would have made light enough of this, but now he did otherwise. He was still able to think, though only by an effort, and he realized that the fever which possessed him must have been in his veins before he started on this fool's venture, for it was unlike him to risk his life.

Was it to the left that the brothers Aigre had turned?

With a great shout that cleft its way over the dead level of the morass until it died as suddenly as it had lived, George Gordon sprang across a narrow waterway and sped swiftly forward for a space, then, suddenly diving through a tangle of low mangrove and tall grass, he hastened his steps until now he ran as fast as the rampant vegetation would allow. He had always been a good runner, but there is a vast difference, as many have discovered for themselves, in taking the same exercise under widely differing circumstances and Mr. Gordon was soon feeling very exhausted. He strove to keep up his pace, however, and shouted now and again as though he hailed someone in front of him, continuing to move swiftly through the short bushes or to speed on across the bog.

Surely, *surely*, that was one of the brothers Aigre — that man he saw there upon the middle of the swamp? He must overtake him. No one else, white or black, knew the way across "The Devil's Dance" and unless he reached the junction upon the further side that night he was like enough never to reach it at all. But had he not seen the brothers Aigre down beyond the Lower Creek, hidden in the heart of the forest at the earliest hour of an awful dawn? Had he not seen, upon the broad petal and wide green leaf of the wild lily, the mark of a tragedy placed there by the hand of the fratricide? Certainly he had seen all this and only a few days ago; certainly he had also understood upon the instant what had happened to the gentler brother, who had doubtless sought to withdraw the poisoned liquid from Abdul's hand before any more could reach his lips. George Gordon pictured, as he ran, that paroxysm of bestial rage. It had passed ere

he reached the Five-forked Tree and had left in its place the dead stupor of unconscious animality.

Now quite suddenly Gordon ceased to run, ceased to shout, and sought instead to hide himself, crouching just where he stood. A swift terror of this modern Cain possessed him. He was sure now that it was Abdul Aigre that he had seen away there in front of him, and he had rather be alone upon "The Devil's Dance" than in the close vicinity of a hunted homicide, for by now that which Abdul Aigre had done must be known to all in Zanzinna. The Five-forked Tree, though embosomed in the forest, stood upon a well-known track, and in this country a man was apt to be judged quickly and by a self-constituted jury, should he do a thing displeasing to his fellow-men. Doubtless Abdul knew this very well and had fled for safety to the morass where nothing, black or white, would follow him. He would not wish to fall into the hands of those whose rude justice was sometimes a worse thing than death to the one who had offended. George Gordon considered — as far, that is, as a man in such a plight may be said to consider anything. He was helpless, for undoubtedly he had lost his way and equally certainly Aigre alone could aid him, but the man was out of sight and moreover he had an unaccountable terror of him and dared not search for him further nor seek assistance at his hand. A moment later he understood his terror, and, standing upright, like an arrow shot by an able hand from a well-strung bow he fled forward in a direct line. What had he seen closely watching him through the interlaced branches of that stunted mangrove-tree? The face of a man or the covert ferocity of a beast intent upon

its prey? Gordon's flight was now that of the altogether desperate, for he understood suddenly that the positions were reversed and that he was the pursued instead of the pursuer; further, he was convinced that the man who tracked him did so with set purpose, hoping to obtain from him the liquor for which he must now be craving — craving as those crave who care for nothing else in all the world. And this was where the danger lay: he, Gordon, had no cognac, no native "shrub" nor alcohol of any kind upon him. But Aigre would not believe this, for out here in Cin white men always carried cognac with them when they traveled. George Gordon had clearly seen the eager face and vigilant eyes of the man peering through the branches of that stunted mangrove, and knew that it was not the face of one with whom he could reason at all. As Abdul had done to his brother Benjamin, so would he presently do to him. George Gordon had never known before that a man could run so fast, as he now ran, and live.

He forgot the wilderness through which he plunged, forgot that at any moment he might make a false step and become ensnared in the treacherous bog, forgot the low undergrowth upon either side and the knotted creepers about his feet, and remembered only that he must out-distance Abdul Aigre or die. He had gained so far; the distance between them was greater now and the low snarl which his pursuer emitted as he saw that he did not overtake his prey, now sounded fainter each time it reached him.

Then, with a suddenness which usually only the dreamer knows, Gordon became aware of a thing so

strange that, upon the instant, his terror increased a hundredfold and his flight descended to the wild unmeaning effort of one who knows exactly what he does but no longer understands quite clearly why he does it. It seemed to him now that after all it was neither man nor beast that hunted him nor was he any longer fleeing through a wilderness of grass and rushes, trees and scrub. He fled, or so it appeared to his bewildered thought, through a great wild waste which some called "the world," but others named it "life," and he fled not from the bodily form of a beast nor the outlined head of a man, but from a thing called carnal despotism or sensual desire. It seemed to him that this bestial longing which pursued him had done so always, and that it had many names, yet, when he turned and looked at it, as he felt he often must, though ever against his will, one name in chief stood forth—the fear of drink. These words were written large upon the air, and above them waved a banner in the hand of Death. Ah! that which pursued him was an army now, and it approached him steadily till soon it must close in and surround him on every side. No! Here was an open space. Here was a wide rough road. Surely one familiar to him and offering a merciful way of escape, if only he could reach it. To do so he must leap the broad stretch of swamp which faced him now, covered with its vivid green. Bog? What matter? He could clear it easily and gain the safety of that firmer ground. He must clear it, for the thing—he knew not what it was, carnal despotism, drink or death—had called its devilish army round it now and snarled or shouted at him all the time. Was it the sound of a

wild beast laughing like a man, or was it the roar of hell gone mad, that filled his ears and almost paralyzed his limbs?

Then for a moment the mist was cleared from before his eyes and he saw exactly where he stood. There in front of him, upon the further side of that wide stretch of treacherous bog, was indeed the beaten track, the rough familiar road that led from the Upper to the Lower Creek, while behind him, and gaining rapidly upon him, was Abdul Aigre, obviously not sane, venting his anger as he ran in short sharp barks like those of an angry dog, and foaming all the time.

George Gordon saw exactly where he stood. Should he delay another moment his mark would be upon the bright green grass as Benjamin's had been upon the forest lily. Should he jump and not clear the bog, he would die as that other Englishman had died, of whom he had heard an idle tale in an idle hour. He would die quite slowly, quite surely of hunger, thirst and the pestilential poison of the place.

Aigre was close upon him now. Gordon backed and backed again; then rose into the air, but even as his feet flew from the firm ground, he knew that *he had not cleared the bog*, but he knew nothing more, for he felt the world rise up, or so it seemed to him, and seize his form in a deadly snare, while it locked him in a permanent embrace.

So George Gordon fled and fell. Fleeing from a danger which might, as he supposed, at any moment prove too strong for him. Yet, had he possessed any knowledge at all of life as it really is, the terror which dictated his mad flight could have had no terror for him, for fear is born of ignorance alone and when met by

knowledge of the Truth is mastered instantly, even as darkness is extinguished by the light. Ignorance gives abortive birth to that which *is not* but only seems to be; while knowledge brings to light that which *is* and therefore always has been and evermore must be — the eternal safety of a world controlled by an intelligence all divine, the perfect peace of man embraced by the law of Love.

CHAPTER IV

THE SAME

A DAY later Joseph Trott sat idly before the door of English Jim's hut away down by the Lower Creek. He watched the northern road and impatiently wondered, "Would Gordon never appear upon it? He must have reached the Middle Creek hours ago."

The Creole mother nursed two babies in her lap and watched the road as well. "Why did English Jim so long delay to come?"

A speck in the far distance grew and took upon itself the shape and form of a man. Both the watchers, equally eager it would seem, started to their feet. Then at the same moment each turned and disappointedly reëntered the hut, while the negro, for such it was that they had seen, hastening his steps beckoned to Mr. Trott.

The conversation was a short one, and a moment later the sleepy settlement became aware of two men hurrying past tent and wooden hut and speeding along the track that led up-country. Joseph Trott felt in his breast pocket and reassured himself that he had money enough about his person for the job before him.

Three days later he returned and together he and the negro brought George Gordon into the settlement. It was a time of sloth here. Men slept a great deal at this season, when existence was almost a blank in Zanzinna.

The year's produce had all been exported; no imports would be received during the rains, and though these still delayed their coming the town slouched drearily through the day and lengthened the hours given to slumber at night. So it was that at the settlement no one observed the advent of Joseph Trott nor asked questions of his purpose. The black had been well paid. He had, therefore, much to gain and nothing to lose by remaining silent, and indeed he had no wish to speak. He desired to forget that hour when Abdul Aigre had stood before him suddenly aware that the craving for brandy was upon him, and, like a man distraught, had told him that for a bottle of liquor he could have the white man who lay at their feet and still lived.

"A white man's life should be worth some money! The negro could have the money, all that Abdul wanted was the brandy. Joseph Trott was the white man's friend; find Joseph Trott. He would both bring the brandy and pay the money, but . . . if either he or the nigger mentioned the name of Abdul Aigre . . . !" Here the homicide laughed and his hearer had not waited longer; there was no necessity to do so, for it was all quite simple. He had known for days that Benjamin Aigre was dead; he knew now what had killed him, so he had left the vicinity of the swamp without a moment's thought, but the next day returned with Joseph Trott and the brandy. To the Zanzinna lawyer Abdul Aigre had told a story which was true enough as he had ascertained by closely cross-questioning the negro. Abdul Aigre had, it appeared, watched Gordon crouching by a mangrove bush but had not recognized him, until suddenly, the man he watched had started to his feet and fled across the swamp like a de-

mented thing. Abdul had then recognized the fugitive and had shouted to him to stop, for he saw that he was heading for the bog, and was apparently unaware of the treacherous nature of the ground. Gordon, however, but ran the faster and Abdul's efforts to save him proved fruitless. It became evident to him that Gordon meant to attempt to clear in a bound the wide stretch of bog which edged "The Devil's Dance," just where it skirted the road leading south, and he had been aware that the man did not live who could do it. Believing the fugitive he was making every effort to save was the victim of marsh fever, Abdul Aigre had shouted to the nigger whom he had observed running in a line with him, but upon the rough road which skirted the further side of the swamp, and had called upon the man to aid him in rescuing Gordon.

He must save him if he could. A life should atone for a life. Benjamin's he had taken; Gordon's he would restore.

Thus again had George Gordon run when none pursued, for it was not until together Abdul and the negro had succeeded in withdrawing his imprisoned limbs from the succulent earth, that Abdul had suddenly realized that doubtless the man whom he had saved carried liquor upon him, as did all white men traveling in the interior. He found, however, that he was mistaken; George Gordon carried neither brandy, "shrub" nor rum. Then, Abdul Aigre told Mr. Joseph Trott, he had considered and had remembered that Mr. Trott was Mr. Gordon's friend and would certainly supply, in exchange for the life of the Englishman, the drink for which his soul craved.

The body of a man for a bottle of brandy! Well!

The one has been given for the other before, not once but many and many a time; only, as a rule, the man who makes the exchange arranges the bargain with his own soul, and gives that as well. This time the sum worked out quite nicely for George Gordon. As to how it worked out for Abdul Aigre is another matter. We need remember him no more. We are not in this story primarily concerned with men or women. They figure in these pages, because it is thus that the thought of mortal man externalizes in this world of ours to-day, as it has done throughout the ages' tragedy. But they pass upon this page as a puppet plays a part, dancing to the tune played by a hand that it does not even see. So let them "dree their weird," these puppets of the present and the past, these men and women of a great dream world, mere shadows of a dream within a dream. Temporal, not eternal, they have their places within the calendar of man and are extinguished by the first faint glimmer of Eternity. So let them pass; nor let them occupy our thought for long: inverted, they teach us of the ages' Truth, then . . . *are not, for the Truth alone is true.*

CHAPTER V

THE SAME

It was the day but one following that upon which Joseph Trott had brought Mr. Gordon into the settlement. While the dawn was very young he bent over the palmetto litter whereon the sick man lay, and finding him conscious spoke rapidly.

"Lola still sleeps heavily: I have seen to that," he said. "You can smell the oola berry in the hut, but it is quite harmless and I only crushed a little. I wish the fruit was not so young, but the juice is plentiful. We are just in time but we must hurry. Aigre found you in the swamp and sent for me. Luckily, the *Crocodile* has been delayed, her cargo is late, and the rains still hold off. This litter is the best I can do for you, and I have carriers that I can trust — that is to say, they'll hustle for money."

"Lola?" Mr. Gordon asked, and was dismayed by the weakness of his voice.

"Oh!" Trott laughed quietly, then whispered a word in the sick man's ear which startled even George Gordon. He glanced rapidly towards the hut and noted through the open door that one infant only lay sleeping by the Creole's side. It was a simple enough plan — this device of Trott's, and no one but Lola could identify the children. What if she waited for a day? In a week she would be reconciled and anyway

she would be able to prove nothing nor could she interfere; there would be no time for that before he left the island with the child safe in his keeping. She might assert that he had taken her child and left his own but she would not be able to prove it, and no one in the island knew of English Jim's sudden good fortune save Trott and himself. As to James Young's child, well, there was not another woman here in the small settlement and men take no notice of babes so young as were these two boys. Certainly there was the missionary chap to be reckoned with, but he was still away, and likely to remain away. That was well, for Richard Gray had doubtless visited Lola often. If anyone could become an inconvenience, Mr. Gray was that man, but before his return to the settlement the *Crocodile* would have left port, carrying on board not only George Gordon, but James Young's infant and all the papers necessary to prove the child's identity as heir to a large fortune. The steamer would carry in addition that letter signed by English Jim a day before he died appointing George Gordon sole guardian of his heir and trustee of the boy's wealth.

The reader may ask why Mr. Gordon did not wish to take the mother with him, why he acceded to Trott's suggestion that he should say nothing at all about her son's inheritance to the Creole, and why he should leave her his child in place of her own. The reason was simple enough. The man had from his earliest childhood formed the habit of taking the course, crooked or straight, which promised to result in the least trouble to himself. Legally he was guardian to James Young's son; the child's education had been placed in his hands by his dying father and he alone knew that at the time

when English Jim signed that letter his mind was confused by the fever that heated his brain and enfeebled his limbs. Lola had not for the most part entered the troubled thought of the sick man. The memory of that other woman whom he had loved and wished to marry in the days of his earliest manhood had been in his heart all those last hours, and he had died with her name upon his lips. George Gordon saw nothing to be gained and much inconvenience to be met as the years should pass and educate the Creole in the ways of a civilized world, should he take her to England and acknowledge her as the child's mother. Joseph Trott's plan was a perfectly safe one and simplified matters enormously; in a few weeks Lola would be content enough to nurse one child instead of two and what matter whether that child were her own or another's? At any rate, and this was the only point which Mr. Gordon considered important, she would be quite helpless to object while in this remote country. She was without money, and, as he knew, without friends, for English Jim, using a rare opportunity, had but lately brought her from one of the smaller islands, one with which Cin held no direct communication. The only person who would pay the least attention to her story was the Rev. Richard Gray and he, as Mr. Gordon had ascertained, was now certain not to return to the Lower Creek for some time. Before he came back Joseph Trott would take care that Lola was on her way by a circuitous route to her distant island home. It would be impossible for her to prove anything before she left. Joseph Trott would see to that, and a month hence the whole settlement would as likely as not have dispersed.

The plan was perfectly safe and how free it left him!

At last he would have a large income at his disposal, and with no one in the world to consult as to the expenditure thereof, should he succeed in giving Lola the slip.

Once landed in that distant island she would return contentedly enough to the habits of her childhood. She would weave the wide grass into conical hats, big-brimmed as the leaf of the wild water-lily. So she would earn enough of the current coin to feed herself and the brat. Soon, no doubt, she would marry some Spaniard, or perhaps a French Creole. But she would continue to work and so have neither time nor opportunity to inconvenience him. Yes, Lola would be safe enough away there in the further south among those little-known islands.

So far as Gordon himself was concerned, Lola was welcome to have and keep his child. She would bring it up in her remote home, see that it had enough to eat; and if it descended to the level of the native what matter? He had no love for it; he had never had any for its mother, and one infant was sufficient inconvenience; two would double the burden. There was no other way, Trott was right there. Lola, should she be consulted, would never consent to let her own child go to Europe while she remained behind, and Lola herself would be an intolerable nuisance; women were always that. What a poor fool James Young had been — mere clay always in the hands of those cleverer than himself, though Lola was scarcely one of them. Kindly, gentle, lazy, the only child of an only child and left motherless at an early age, James Young had years ago broken all ties with his home and country and had not even informed his father of his marriage to the Creole. A lin-

gering sentiment had caused him to leave instructions with George Gordon that the boy should be named after his paternal grandfather. Mr. Gordon would see that this was done. It would be a wise step to take. English Jim had placed the infant's future entirely in his care. Well, that was natural enough. Gordon was the only approach to a friend that Young had made since he left England. He had never been a creature of discernment. That was true enough. Certainly he had known nothing of the real character of the man in whom he, when on his death-bed, had reposed the utmost confidence. Such men as this are not mental anatomists. All his life James Young had lived and loved from day to day, taking things as the lazy nature does, much as they come, preferring always to give up his own opinion rather than to endure one moment of unpleasantness. He had not a near relation in the world nor an intimate friend; never in his life had he written a superfluous letter, while he had left many an important communication unanswered. So it came about naturally enough that the plan which Joseph Trott and George Gordon had devised between them, when they heard of the child's birth and of the death of English Jim's father, seemed capable of being worked out almost from start to finish, just as they had arranged.

They had left the settlement and all went smoothly. The carriers were well paid and the party traveled fast until the heat compelled them to rest. George Gordon was very drowsy and the child as well. No doubt the rhythmical movement of the stretcher upon which they lay, coupled with the rays of the morning sun, deep-

ened their sleep. They had left Lola and the other babe sleeping soundly away back at the Lower Creek when Joseph Trott called a halt. A kindly shade was found beneath the branches of a flamboyant tree and soon the whole party slept. Then it was that George Gordon had a strange dream which all his life he remembered — a dream that was one day to cause him serious disquiet.

In his dream he slept, but suddenly it seemed, as it sometimes does in sleep, that he awoke and found that upon his breast he held a child. As he gazed at it he saw that it closely resembled English Jim. Then a shadow fell across the wall of the room in which he seemed to rest and he became aware that someone stood behind him. He could not move, however, nor could he call aloud — even when he realized that he was being robbed of the child who held his money in its baby lap. He did not see it happen, for while the dreamer dreams, a thing may come to pass more quickly than the lightning flashes in the sky, but he found that James Young's child had been taken from him. He heard low laughter as he dreamed, and saw his money dropping on the floor. He rose quickly from his bed and tried to pick the money up but, though the room was full of gold, he could not hold a single coin between his fingers. Each one rose up upon its side and rolled away as he approached it, and all the time that low laugh filled the room, and always one stood beside him, yet, turn as quickly as he might, he could not see that other's face. Worn out he fell upon the floor and again the gold rose up till piece by piece it rested on him. Now he longed greatly to be rid of it, longed

that he might never see a single coin again, but no! its dead weight was ever there and crushed and held him to the earth till slowly, fearfully, he died.

Quite suddenly George Gordon awoke. With a nervous start he sat up on the stretcher until he felt sufficiently awake to realize that it was indeed a dream and nothing more; James Young's child was there, and, as it seemed, had not even stirred. A blossom had fallen from the tree above and rested curiously between its lips. That was all. Otherwise the infant slept just as it had slept when he himself had closed his eyes. He turned upon his side and dreamed again. This time it was of the blossom that he dreamed. Yet was it the blossom from the tree above? No, it could not be, for the flamboyant bloom is red. He seemed to rest with the child once more upon his breast when suddenly around them both a shower of purple petals fell. No! they were white and soft and cold as is the snow-flake of the northern sky. But was ever snow so cold as this? Surely it was not snow but the tender bloom from the tree above. It fell upon his upturned face, yet no breeze was there to stir a single leaf. It fell upon the infant's baby form and shrouded it in a pall of white. Was ever northern snow so cold as this blossom from a southern forest tree? Faster, faster the flowers fell, till they shut the daylight out and darkened all the world for both. Was he then in an ice-bound grave, or was it but a dream? The infant lay across his heart. Was ever childish hand so cold as this? Was ever childish form so dire and dread a weight? Was ever a living death so drear? Was it snow from a northern sky? Was it blossom from a southern forest tree? *Or was it money all the*

time? The grave was filled with laughter now; low laughter, yet always clear. Almost the rippling murmur was articulate. Ha! That was not laughter, but a mocking voice which sang an awful dirge:—

“Gold, gold, gold;
Dust, dust, dust;
Blossoms made of poison and of pain!
Greed, greed, greed;
Death, death, death;
A life made up of hatred and of hell;
A life made up of selfishness and sin!
What shall it gain? What can it win?
Gold, gold, gold! Dust, merely dust:
Greed, greed, greed! Death, certain death.”

George Gordon awoke with extraordinary suddenness, as one wakens when roused by something quite unusual. For the moment he felt convinced that he had not dreamed. Bah! There lay the child sleeping quietly as it had slept ever since Trott had called the midday halt. The pale petals of a white blossom rested between its lips. That was all.

“You fool!”

Joseph Trott shouted loudly as he leaped a fallen tree and with a shaking hand snatched the tiny flower from between the baby lips.

“You fool!”

He snarled as an angry cur snarls at its fellow whom all the time it fears. “It is the poison bloom. How came it here? If the child has sucked it long he will die to-day.”

Then George Gordon told him of his double dream and both men called for a hasty start, for superstition ever rules the ignorant and vile. How came the poison blossom there? All had slept, and not even Sam, the

watchman, had seen or heard a stranger pass that way. But perhaps he too had slept and — lied. How came the poison blossom there? Was it indeed a woman's laugh which George Gordon had heard yet had not heeded, thinking he merely dreamed? Was it indeed a woman's form that had passed him with a swift and silent step? No matter. English Jim's child lay there upon the stretcher of palmetto leaf and breathed as gently as though it rested on its mother's breast; the poison blossom had done no harm, and by the morrow Gordon and his ward would have left the island many leagues behind. How came the poison blossom there? What matter, anyway? The *Crocodile* would soon be safely homeward bound, and Lola . . . left far behind.

CHAPTER VI

THE SAME

A WEEK had passed since the s.s. *Crocodile* weighed anchor and bade a six months' farewell to the island of Cin. The Frenchwoman in whose care Joseph Trott had placed the young infant eight days ago sat on the starboard deck and watched the child as it slept. She herself was glad indeed to know that she was homeward bound. The handsome remuneration which the Zanzinna lawyer had offered her was more than enough to induce her to lavish a solicitous care on her helpless little charge, for she longed to leave the island behind her and forget the great mistake of her life. Mr. Gordon she had not yet seen. He had been ill ever since he boarded the steamer, but proposed, so the captain had that morning told her, to come on deck that day.

A shadow fell across the book she read, and looking up she saw the man with whom her thoughts were occupied. He asked her eagerly how the child did. Was he strong now? Had that perpetual wail ceased which had wearied him for two days after they embarked, or had his berth merely been changed?

Mme. Desmesures was gratified and also touched by the interest Mr. Gordon displayed. She knew nothing of this man and had been meagerly informed by Mr.

Trott that, having been suddenly left a widower, he needed a woman to care for his infant ward.

Mr. Gordon talked of the child now. Mme. Desmesures reassured him as to its health, which was now excellent, the sea air —

The Frenchwoman paused abruptly. What had caused Monsieur Gordon's face to pale so perceptibly? There was no reason, surely, in the advent of the kindly English missionary who now stood beside her chair and regarded the child as it rested in her lap.

Eight bells struck and all descended in silence to the saloon. Mme. Desmesures was still perplexed. The English padre spoke so little to-day. Usually he kept the table busy, attentive to his interesting speech and the account of his year of travel. He had told them of his intention to prolong those travels, but Mme. Desmesures knew that family matters unexpectedly summoned him home. Perhaps he thought much about his sick mother to-day. That must no doubt be the reason of the thoughtful silence that he maintained through the midday meal.

That afternoon the Rev. Richard Gray sat long by the Frenchwoman's side and asked her many questions relative to her charge. Once, he took the child from her lap and looked with curiosity at it, then gave it back to her with the trite remark that it took a woman, he thought, to know one baby from another while they were so young as this.

Meanwhile, George Gordon lay in his berth and considered many things. He had gone to the top of the companion-ladder after lunch and had seen Mr. Gray holding the infant in his arms. No matter! The *Crocodile* was bound for Europe, not for Cin, and it

was a lucky providence which brought the missionary away from the island so soon, though certainly Gordon would have preferred that he should travel by some other boat.

At a European port, six weeks later, the party broke up. The Frenchwoman, having first found a substitute willing to proceed to England in charge of the child till Mr. Gordon could arrange for a permanent nurse, continued her journey to the mother who awaited her in a remote Breton village. Mr. Gray hastened homeward overland in answer to the cable he had just received, and George Gordon proceeded quietly to England in search of those who held in trust the baby Andrew's large fortune.

Some months later the Zanzinna lawyer received a letter which satisfied him entirely. "Good!" he ejaculated, while he locked away a certain bill of exchange that he had extracted from the letter. "It all works out very well . . . I wish I knew whether Lola did or did not change those brats that day. If she did then Sam must have seen her, unless he slept when he should have watched and then lied to me. I believe she did and yet I can't feel sure. Sometimes," he paused and brushed away with an angry curse the flies which thronged about his head in spite of the sticky mass upon his table which had ensnared so many of their number. He tilted his chair until his black hair touched the wall of the tiny office, then lifted his feet, clad in gay socks and white canvas shoes not over clean, and rested them upon the table which had evidently not been scrubbed for many days.

"Sometimes I feel sure," he muttered, "that if she was there at all she had not time to do more than place

that blossom between the lips of the brat upon the litter. She would not have dared to face a fuss with me with all the carriers on my side, and I believe I woke a minute too soon for her. Her Spanish blood would make her place the poison blossom in her own child's mouth rather than let us have him, though doubtless it was originally meant for a pretty little revenge upon Gordon. After all," he rose now and paced the small room very slowly; "after all, I believe she did not change those brats. I am not even sure that she was there at all. A man like Gordon has more than one enemy and I don't see how the Creole could have done the distance in the time. The oola berry was strong and I cooked enough to make her sleep for hours. We traveled fast and halted barely thirty minutes. No, I don't see how she could have been there at all. At any rate I am sure," and his tone was now one of distinct approbation, "that neither she nor the child can ever interfere with us. So what matter which brat it was she took away with her? The boy that Gordon has in tow must pass for James Young's son, whatever his parentage may be, or the game would be up and my yearly income substantially cut down. Anyhow," he paused to drink a draught of rum and water, then seated himself before his table and began to sort the papers upon it. "Anyhow," he repeated, "Lola is safely stowed away and content enough with her life. Richard Gray left Zanzinna without returning to the Lower Creek; so . . . all goes very well . . . unless Sam lied that day we left the settlement? I told him I had seen the padre cross the stream, but he declared it was a traveler going north that he had spoken to a minute before. Bah! but how can one get at

the truth! Sam would tell a dozen lies to save his skin."

So Joseph Trott was not in reality at ease, for Richard Gray with his high moral code might prove a danger in the future as Gordon had warned him many times before he left Zanzinna.

Thus within the dream are many minor dreams. The offspring of illusion, they have in reality no present, no future, and no past, yet should be known for what they are, and thus their seeming power proven powerless.

CHAPTER VII

INOCULATION

Two months after he had left the island of Cin George Gordon landed in England, and before ten days had passed he found the home he wanted for his ward. He presented to the firm of Snares & Snarles credentials which satisfied the letter of the law, and he became the recognized guardian of the infant, Andrew Young. He became also the custodian of the child's large income till he should be of age. Had James Young known anything at all of common caution, or had his father before him possessed even an ordinary sense of responsibility, perhaps such a circumstance could never have come about. But neither of these men had ever been anything but wild and weak, though all the time hiding the error of their weakness under a kindly smile, accepting with a gentle tolerance, because to do so saved them trouble, much which they never should have tolerated.

The child Andrew was now placed by Mr. Gordon in the home of a country gentleman, and in course of time went through the usual routine, passing on from his preparatory to his public school and thence to Cambridge.

As the boy grew older a strange antipathy, which he had always and quite plainly evinced towards his guardian, became conspicuous to all. Andrew Young

never attempted to account for it; he had always hated George Gordon; he supposed that he always should do so. He never made any effort to fight against his objection to the man; he feared him as much as he detested him and secretly he proposed that the day he came of age should be the day on which he and his guardian should bid each other a decisive farewell. They had never possessed anything in common, and it became obvious to Andrew as he grew older that his large income had been grossly misspent for years. He was, however, quite unable to protest until he should reach the age of twenty-one.

Mr. Gordon perfectly understood his ward's attitude. He knew well, in fact he had known for years, that if he wished to be a wealthy man in his old age, he must feather his nest while he might. Accordingly during Andrew's long minority Gordon was careful to obey the letter of the law while systematically breaking the spirit, and he became very rich indeed. Fortunately, he could not touch the boy's capital, but he drew as his own much of the large yearly income which it yielded and, while skillfully applying the bulk of it to further his own schemes, spent but a moderate portion on his ward, who was the last representative of the family of his quondam friend.

Andrew Young, as far as he knew, had no near relation; indeed, there was no one in the world who really cared for him or took any interest in his future welfare. He led a lonely life and formed the habit of neither giving nor receiving affection. Both at school and at college he was regarded as a "queer chap," moody and rarely sociable. We cannot justly blame him for this. Never in his life had he heard a loving

voice calling him by name nor felt a mother's touch linger on his head. Never once had he looked into a father's eyes and received a kindly answer to those questions which throng the growing thought of every normal child. In fact, he knew nothing of human sympathy or unselfish love, and now he bade farewell willingly enough to the only home that he had ever known. But the Egauts' house was unworthy of that sacred name. Neither master nor mistress had ever evinced any particular interest in Andrew Young since Mr. Gordon had placed him, then an infant, in their care. They had received ample remuneration for the responsibility which they thereby incurred, and he had spent the first seven years of his life entirely under their roof. They, in their turn, had paid a reliable woman high wages to take care of the child and had provided two good rooms for his use and hers. For the rest, they were often away, and when Andrew reached the age of seven they advised George Gordon to send him to a good preparatory school while agreeing to provide a home for him in the holidays. Very dreary always were those holidays for the sensitive lad. He was no student by nature, and neither of the two elderly people, in whose house he felt himself to be something of an encumbrance, made any effort to provide for him either young companions or normal occupation. Naturally enough he had counted the days for many months now until he should come of age and be his own master. That day would be here upon the morrow and he gladly bade, as he himself expected it to be, a long farewell to the man and woman who had never visibly neglected their duty to him and never fulfilled it. They had fed, clothed and educated him

as well as they could have fed, clothed and educated a child of their own, and they had not loved him for one single hour. Neither of them had ever said a harsh word to him; neither of them had ever said a tender word. They would be much less well off now that he was free to choose his own abode, for they felt sure that his choice would not rest upon their house, but out of the annual sum which his guardian had paid them they had been able to save a substantial portion with business-like regularity. To-day they shook hands with Andrew Young cordially enough, but the minute the door closed upon him they began to discuss how best they might invest the money they had saved that year. That a lonely lad stood upon the threshold of his early manhood with the great battle of life before him did not strike either Mr. or Mrs. Egaut as being a matter of any importance. The idea that they had omitted to equip the boy as he might have been equipped, with kind friends made while a child, that they had omitted to cultivate in the slightest his individual ability, or to instill into the young life any ideal at all, did not so much as present itself to them. They were now, as they always had been, occupied with other matters which seemed to them to be of greater moment — matters which concerned themselves primarily and others not at all, save that the social and domestic life of the unit is necessarily interwoven with that of the community. Thus, incidentally, others were concerned in their plans, but merely as needful adjuncts to their creature comforts and personal desires.

Having bidden them farewell, Andrew Young ran down the short drive and jumped into the cab which awaited him. He did not know why he ran, for there

was plenty of time to spare before he need reach the station. Once in the train he threw himself upon the seat and leaned back as a tired man will at the end of a good day's work. Something, he said to himself, had left his life, and he was the freer for it — a certain dreariness which had oppressed him quite consciously for a long time. Thus he thought as the train slowly left the village of Coldash behind; but not so easily is the deep indent of years obliterated, especially when it has been made by the finger-nail of cold indifference and selfish policy upon the plastic nature of a growing child. Long after there appeared in Andrew the foul fruit of seed sown silently while his young life passed from infancy to manhood — seed which, having taken deep root, took long in the uprooting.

The day following that upon which he left the Egauts' house found a small group assembled in the private office of that much respected firm of lawyers, the ancient house of Snares & Snarles.

The two families had been partners for generations. They had constantly intermarried and the cousins who now represented the old business had brought it to a pitch of excellence that placed it foremost among the legal houses, not only in the county of its birth but also throughout that part of England.

Much business had been transacted by those assembled when Andrew Young rose and faced George Gordon. While looking directly at him he asked the lawyers certain pertinent questions with regard to the expenditure of the large income which his property had yielded during his long minority. Mr. Snarles, the junior partner, listened attentively to the short conversation and learned much. He learned, amongst other

things, to admire his cousin, Samuel Snares, even more than before. He learned, too, that English is not such a bad language after all if you know how to use it, when to speak and when to remain silent. No doubt the French tongue has certain points in its favor and will therefore remain the language of diplomacy for some time. People prefer, even when they know that a lie is being told, that the said lie should be well dressed and politely mannered.

The senior partner of this much-respected firm had, of course, no lies to tell. But his attitude was wonderful, and his answers to the young man who was about to assume the personal control of his own property were certainly monumental. They left Andrew Young just where they found him, except that surely they must have increased his confidence in the integrity as well as in the ability of the firm of Snares & Snarles.

The interview was now over. Mr. Young had informed the senior partner that the property which he possessed in that part of the country was to be immediately put up for sale; he intended to travel for a time and wished to be as unencumbered by home affairs as possible.

After leaving the lawyers' office, George Gordon walked a few yards down the street by Andrew Young's side, but immediately they turned the first corner and were out of sight of the wide windows of the house they had just left, both men stopped as if by mutual consent. Neither knew, at that instant, which way he intended to proceed, but both supposed that the hour of a final parting had come and both were very glad that it was so.

"Good-by." Andrew Young spoke curtly and

turned upon his heel. George Gordon did not reply. There was neither time nor necessity for him to do so. He found himself alone upon the pavement, and realized fully that the systematic wrong which he had done his ward for one and twenty years was perfectly known to the young man, who was nevertheless quite unable to object, for he, George Gordon, had been careful never to offend the letter of the law in such a way as to be detected. He realized two other things: firstly, that he had not only deliberately robbed, but also hated and feared, Andrew Young ever since he had brought him, when but an infant, away from the island of Cin. Secondly, he realized to-day for the first time that Andrew hated him. No matter! He was very rich; he had been that for a long time now. His dream of wealth had been fulfilled and for over twenty years he had personally controlled a great deal of money.

CHAPTER VIII

PART OF THE DREAM AND NOTHING MORE

THAT evening, however, while sitting alone in the hotel which he frequented when in London, Mr. Gordon realized something of the hollowness of the worldly possessions for which he had bartered his soul. This wealth that he had amassed had not turned to ashes in his mouth; it had never been anything else. There it was, a large sum of money, all invested in his name; there it had been, an ever-increasing pile, for nearly half his lifetime; but where was the joy? Where was even the mere carnal pleasure that he had anticipated would go hand in hand with so much gold? A great deal of anxiety had been his, but had he ever been really happy for one single day in all his life?

No moral question disturbed him now. Years ago he had told his young wife on the day he married her that he had no moral sense, and was not able to comprehend any code except that of the law of the land in which he happened to reside, and the social laws of his class. That was true still. He was not in the least distressed because he had robbed his ward. He was keenly, desperately disappointed with his whole life, for whether he looked back or whether he looked forward it was dreary, tasteless, stale. Yet he would not have parted with a penny of that wealth, even now that

he understood its powerlessness to make him happy. It was the only thing he thought about, the only thing he cared for. He got no comfort out of it. He traveled third class and knew all the time to a penny what his ticket had cost him.

He loved money and knew that he loved it. Thousands, nay, hundreds of thousands love money, but will not own that it is so even to themselves. The golden calf was but type and shadow of that which is perhaps the most unholy lust that can possess a man or woman. Yet it does often possess them body and soul, and sometimes to the exclusion of all else, blinding the eyes so that they do not even see a brother's need, hardening the heart so that it cannot feel a brother's care, closing the ears to the pitiful cry of a world's great pain. George Gordon does not stand alone. In a greater or a less degree, in some form or other, a vast majority bow down and grovel before the "great image" whose head is made of fine gold while his feet are but part of iron and part of clay, components which can never cleave together nor support the head of gold for long. Sooner or later "a stone . . . cut out *without hands*" smites all that would support that head of gold till the image becomes like the chaff of the summer threshing-floors, and no place is found for it.

"*This is the dream.*" George Gordon was not altogether responsible for his particular part in the dream, nor was he altogether responsible for the particular form which the great image assumed for him, for "money" had ruled his parents' thoughts, and had always bound his own, while to another man the god of materiality may present itself in a different guise.

Throughout the ages, in some form or other, this god has enslaved mankind. What matter whether it be the arrogance of Oriental despotism, the pride of Grecian intellectuality, the tyranny of martial Rome, or the entanglements of a latter-day confusion? What matter which it be while it rules the life and hastens the death of men and of nations?

Yet some noble souls there are, aye many and many a man and many and many a woman, who know that all that is, is the gift of God, and that man is simply steward thereof by reason of His grace. Wealth, thus regarded, brings to thousands joys untold. Love's blessing rests upon such heads, and Love's holy peace within such hearts.

Not such an one had been George Gordon's father. "My position must be kept up" had been his constant cry.

"We have not the money with which to do it," had been his mother's weary answer.

Neither Mr. nor Mrs. Gordon would have told what the world calls a lie, nor would they have stolen so much as a twig from their neighbor's garden, yet their children said that which was not true and took that which was not theirs. Mrs. Gordon, with deep sorrow in her heart, marveled and shed the bitterest tears that a woman can shed, but did not understand at all how it had come about.

When she herself knew that she must shortly die she called her children to her and asked a solemn promise of them, that they would no longer be dishonest or untrue. Poor, fond mother, ignorantly marveling at the weeds which her own restless hand had sown. She did not lie nor did she steal, but for fifteen years her

life had been a hollow sham, dishonest and untrue in thought if not in word or deed.

"My position must be kept up."

"We have not the money with which to do it."

So they had lived in a large house, so she had always worn smart clothes for which she could not rightly pay, but "*My* wife must be well dressed" had been her husband's order from the first. Big dinners must be given to "important people," and she, poor puppet, had welcomed her guests with a cordial smile, knowing all the time that the trifle had consumed a dozen eggs. Then in the end . . . dead failure. His position had been well kept up, and . . . another man received the post which he had hoped for years to win. Meanwhile, the clever eldest girl had stayed away from school and the clever boys had all run wild because the money said, "I cannot go so far."

And afterwards, after the long strain of years all spent in abject servitude to the limit of an almost empty purse, had come the old, old story.

"You must have a long rest, a strengthening diet, a thorough change and perfect freedom from anxiety."

The doctor's tone was kind enough and from his point of view his words were reasonable. How could he know that the tradesmen's bills were in arrears and the patient's credit almost to snapping point? So he held his finger on her wrist, then listened to the beating of her heart, and knew that very soon she would need neither rest nor change nor any diet at all.

Meanwhile the weary woman had gently answered "Yes" to all he said, but ten minutes later, when his car left her garden gate, she turned upon her bed and laughed aloud. Then lifting a shaking hand she

opened the pass-book which lay by her side. She laughed again, for she saw that "Money" was now bidding her and hers a final, curt farewell, but ere it fled it left a dreary song upon the air which filled her aching heart to bursting point and thundered round her bed till she turned and tossed there where she lay; and as she writhed in mental agony she muttered of her god, and knew not that it was the only god she had worshiped for many years.

"Money! Money! Money! For the love of God and our fair fame give . . . me . . . more . . . money."

This was the word that thronged her thought and beat upon her tired ear until the end. She died alone. Yet, no! "Money" stood by the door, or so it seemed to her, and, laughing, shook the prostrate woman's empty purse as the dancer shakes a tambourine; then danced around her bed a slow and stealthy, yet not stately, dance, singing the while a dreary dirge, the chorus whereof is voiced by a wailing world.

And this was the dirge of death that swept over her soul, aye, and sweeps o'er many another soul to-day with a fearful arrogance which is the foulest blasphemy.

"Mankind is mine! From first to last mankind is mine. If I am there in plenty, this thing a silly world calls man loves me all the time, aye, lusts for more. If I am there in sparsity, he obeys my every beck and call. I reign supreme. From the cradle to the grave I reign supreme; my every whim is law. Man does but catch a glimmer from my glittering side, and lo! goes mad with passion's wild desire to seize and hold me for

his own. I do but roll upon my golden side and he becomes distraught with fear lest I should leave his sight for aye. His every thought I chain to earth, his soul I bind in hell; I sear his very flesh with ghastly torment born of greed inflamed. For me, urged onward by insensate lust, this thing called man will lie and rob and cheat even his wedded wife, even the child she beareth him, even his better self. Yet . . . all the time, did he but know the truth, I am but dust and verily I have no power at all. Made of illusion, robed in a lie, I am a dream and nothing more; yet I reign supreme. From the cradle to the grave I, the despot, rule the slave. I, mere matter, riot, riot o'er the mind which man calls his, though 'tis but puppet plaything of my power. Yet . . . well I know I have no power at all, save . . . yes! that of a man's belief, a power all made of pain, the poisonous pinch of penury, the pitiful pride of wealth. Yet . . . well I know, born of illusion, bred on a lie, I am a dream and nothing more."

Thus had George Gordon's mother lived; thus had she died. And he had never known any other god than hers, so can we marvel that his life was selfish in its circumspection? What matter whether man obeys the lack of money or the love of money, if it is "Money" that he thinks of all the time? What then is man, that his whole life should be so dwarfed and his heaven jeopardized by obedience to a sordid seeming such as this? What matter whether the power which he worships be a coffer full of gold or the absence of that gold, surnamed anxiety? What matter which, so long as he dare not call his time, his thought, his action,

aye, even his very soul his own? When gold is absent it sometimes rules a man's mentality to the exclusion of all bliss, filling his heart with a dire dread, and whispering in his ear, held close upon the earth, "Just so far and not one step farther shall you go, for without me"—ah, the horror of that blasphemy—"without me you can do nothing." And from the coffer filled with gold issues at times a foul and fetid form named Avarice, whose pestilential breath poisons the air as she mutters of the terror that possesses her, "Hold it, hide it, keep it, save it, for fear it dwindle and grow less and you be left bereft of life." At times the coffer filled with gold to another man will sing another song and murmur of a power never promised to mortal man, "With me to back you up you can do anything; therefore spend me, spend me, spend me, but spend me ever on yourself, for though there is so much of me, still there is none to spare."

Can we then marvel at the man who, as it happened, bore the name of George Gordon? To-day he sat alone in a London room and knew himself to be alone in the world. An hour since, he had passed the Rev. Richard Gray in Regent Street and had seen at once that Mr. Gray had no recollection of him whatever. He had not met the clergyman since they parted on the deck of the *s.s. Crocodile*, and it was natural enough that the young missionary of twenty years ago should not now recognize a man who even then was much older than himself. The matter was of no importance except that it seemed to add absurdly to the weight of loneliness that oppressed George Gordon.

Just upon that spot, in the history of mortal man the mental miasma of the ages had thus externalized,

and he, poor sinner, suffered as the ignorant who do not even search for light must suffer, till the redeemer, Knowledge, wakes them from the Adamic sleep and imparts to them the peace and power of God.

So let us leave, for the present at least, this man named Gordon. As I have said before, we are not chiefly concerned with this person or with that, but mainly with the fundamental facts of life, and for these each reader much search between the lines on every page, keeping always his vision high above the finite form of men and things, for thus only can he hope to fathom the infinite and rest within the True.

CHAPTER IX

MEN AND WOMEN

Now, come back with me some years to the day on which the Rev. Richard Gray had first entered the old Rectory garden at Inkervale, where he was afterwards to spend so many hours of his life. Upon this summer afternoon he and Miss Priscilla Gray had walked up from the village station in order to pay their first visit of inspection. The late incumbent, a very old man quite past his work, had finally retired six months before and Mr. Gray, then a young missionary in the East, had been summoned home to take charge of his uncle's flock. The family living had long been promised to him and although without any particular bent to the life of ministry in the Church, he was so poor at this time as to be almost unable to support his widowed mother and only sister. The expensive education which both he and his sister Priscilla had received, was yet not of a nature to enable them to achieve success as workers in a struggling world, where men and women rise as best they can and, if need be, upon the shoulders of a weaker friend or foe. Few men of Mr. Gray's temperament would have held out as long as he did against the temptations of a rich family living, a pastoral well-to-do flock and a beautiful home among the grandest scenery in England. Yet, had he con-

sidered himself alone, he never would have taken orders. His instinct rebelled against any restriction upon his as yet undeveloped thought, and he knew himself to be one of those men who mature slowly and at twenty are still waiting for that which shall mold the character and shape it to a form perhaps inconceivable alike to themselves and to those who know them best. But he had his mother, weak of health and wailing of tongue, to provide for; besides, and this was the double weight which finally pressed the lever down, there was his sister's lot to brighten and a child's young life to happify and cherish. Priscilla, the elder by several years, had for some time borne daily and almost alone a burden that he, in a great measure, had so far escaped. Before taking orders he had worked joyously at his easel in the tiny studio in Paris, which was at all times a haven of rest to him, while she had nursed their mother, the fractious invalid who brooded always upon another's sin and neither could nor would, it seemed, forgive the act which had robbed her of her worldly wealth. Upon Priscilla also had fallen the detailed care of the little Lily, the orphan child of the one who had wronged them all. Priscilla had not said a word when she placed in his hand their uncle's letter offering to procure for him the family living when he himself should retire, but he then saw upon her face such a rush of hope, mingled with an anxiety so desperate, that the recollection haunted him for days and finally he had spoken to her. It seemed to him she answered without volition of her own when she said the one word, "Lily!"

Richard Gray knew what the word thus used meant upon Priscilla's lips. He knew that she thought of the

younger sister who had been laid to rest a year ago, while the little Lily was but an infant.

So it came about that finally brush and palette were laid aside; many thick volumes were skimmed within a fortnight and certain information gleaned by a quick brain; an examination passed; later some words were murmured in his ear, a man's hands laid upon his head and Richard Gray became a clergyman of the Church of England and started at once upon what turned out to be a very short career as a missionary.

Such in brief was the history of a mistake which had changed the whole current of more lives than one. It had all happened some time ago, but it seemed to Mr. Gray to-day that the initial blunder had been but the forerunner of many another, each one more grievous than the last. It had been a noble but seemingly superfluous sacrifice, that tearing asunder of the ties that had bound him to the roving freedom of an artist's life, for his mother had died a year afterwards and he and Priscilla could have lived happily enough upon their small income and could have done justice also to the child whose only home was in their care. Had he but stood firm he might have developed his undoubted talent and enjoyed the freedom which was not only natural to him but a necessary aid to the maturing of his somewhat peculiar character. Instead, he must face the fact that he stood before the world an ordained minister of the Church, with specific duties to perform and a life cast already in a particular mold and governed in a great measure by man-made, if canonical, law. It did not occur to him to leave the ministry. He would do his best and give what help and comfort he might to the souls entrusted to his care.

Mr. Gray had been fairly established in the Rectory for some weeks, when one day quite suddenly Gabriel Grand entered his life. He did not suppose that he should ever forget that day. He had known many women well, gentle mannered and kind of heart; he had been the companion of refined women ever since his early childhood, but he had never met anyone the least like Gabriel. He and Priscilla had called upon her and the widowed lady who always lived with her as soon as might be after their arrival at the Hall, and Miss Grand had received them alone in the library. Was she barely seventeen, this woman with the grave eyes, the stern mouth and wonderful dark hair, parted so distinctly and waving so softly above her brow? His artist's eye recognized at once that they stood upon common ground, for he saw that the dress which she wore was too perfect in its simplicity and too beautiful in its blending of soft colors to have been chosen by the mere woman of fashion.

"You have studied art," he said presently; "in Italy I suppose."

"Yes," she answered, pleased that he should have gathered so much in so short a time. "My father loved it. That is one reason why we lived so much abroad."

During that summer the Rector formed a habit of going often to the Hall, but Miss Grand was much away and when at home her time was usually occupied with a house full of visitors. It was no surprise to the neighborhood when one day in early autumn her engagement was announced. What did surprise those who knew nothing of Gabriel Grand's private affairs was the further announcement that the engagement would certainly be a long one. She had, it appeared,

only a very moderate annual allowance until she should come of age, and Captain Russell, one of many brothers, had barely enough to meet his requirements as a bachelor in India so that, although she was a considerable heiress, there was nothing for it but to wait for his promotion and the higher rate of pay which should make it possible for the young people to contemplate housekeeping together.

Gabriel herself told Mr. Gray of her engagement. "You will," she said, "be surprised to hear that I am going to marry Captain Russell; it was settled between us a week ago."

Richard Gray was intensely surprised. "I must congratulate you," he said, and then shortly suggested that he should see whether his sister was ready to return home, as he had an appointment at the Rectory.

Miss Grand's engagement had taken place soon after she had come to live at the Hall and for some time she was the affianced wife of Captain Russell. Then one day she sent for Mr. Gray and received him alone in the library. "You are our Rector," she said, "and our oldest friend in the neighborhood. I have to ask you to do me a kindness; it seems to me quite impossible to delay in this matter. If you will read this letter we will talk again afterwards."

Mr. Gray took the letter in his hand and read it in silence. He remained silent a long time after reading it. Once again Gabriel surprised him. He himself was quite incapable of writing such a letter as that which she had just handed him. It was a simple, business-like statement of fact. Captain Russell, it appeared, so far from attempting to save money since becoming engaged to Miss Grand, had systematically

lived beyond his means and now proposed to extricate himself from his difficulties by marriage with a wealthy woman some years his senior. The thing is often done and did not of itself astonish Mr. Gray. It was the writer's calm and unvarnished statement of the circumstances that staggered him.

"It is necessary," Gabriel spoke very evenly and Mr. Gray could read nothing at all from her face, "that our friends should know of this change in my relations to Captain Russell. I feel sure that you and Miss Priscilla will inform them for me."

While she spoke it seemed to Richard that for a second time a lifetime of possibilities flashed through his mind, and, because even as possibilities they meant so much to him, he forced himself to point out to Gabriel that very soon she would be the mistress of a fortune that would be more than sufficient to cover Captain Russell's debts and leave her scarcely poorer.

Then for the first time he saw her face change, but still he could not read it. That which he saw, however, silenced him instantly. He left the house ten minutes later and told his sister at lunch that day that Gabriel Grand was no longer engaged to Captain Russell.

Priscilla did not question him at all. She was a refined woman of deep feeling, unaccustomed to wear her own heart upon her sleeve and apt to respect the private affairs of her neighbors to an unusual extent. She did remark however that she was very glad to hear that the engagement was a thing of the past.

It had always seemed to her to be one of those unaccountable happenings of which there are by far too many; the mercy was that in this case the mistake had

been found out in time, but this she did not say to Richard.

A few weeks later Miss Grand left England, and while she made preparations for her departure and a lengthy tour abroad, the Grays were much at the Hall. She turned to them for everything and no three people ever served each other better or with a quicker understanding of the other's need. The following week Gabriel went to Germany and there entered upon a life that was more congenial to her than even those happy years spent in such close companionship with her father studying art in Italy.

Richard Gray remained in England at work among his flock, but one beautiful day in May he allowed Priscilla to go to the village in his stead to visit a sick parishioner, for he felt unable to take into the little cottage home, where the need for help was great, that message of hope and courage which he deemed it his duty to carry with him. How could he preach with any honesty "resignation to the will of God" when he himself was quite consciously rebellious against the whole circumstance of his life, while yet he found it difficult to define his exact mental attitude? He knew of course that he ought never to have taken orders. He knew also that he greatly desired to marry Gabriel Grand and had done so ever since the day on which he first met her. He found himself, however, at sea when he sought further, though perfectly aware that these two matters, in spite of their importance, did not of themselves alone fully account for his unsatisfied mental condition.

I wish that it were possible for my pen to paint for you the beauty that surrounded Mr. Gray as he sat in

the Rectory garden to-day. The spring was an unusual one and Richard thought that he had never before fully realized how perfect was the picture of peace and plenty upon which he had so often looked when staying with his uncle years before. He rested now in a long chair he had brought from the East, but which was slow to show any signs of wear and tear. Indeed, it seemed that endurance and stability must have been woven into its structure by the patient fingers that had framed and formed it. A tray was by the Rector's side and he poured out a cup of tea but did not drink it. Instead he glanced across the valley away to the far distance where purple pines met golden haze upon a bright skyline; then withdrawing his gaze from the horizon he rested it upon a middle distance, wherein the pines mingled their soft pinnacles with the rounded curves of the great oak and the full branches of the tall elm. Much nearer and to the westward was a coppice of silver birch, Spanish chestnut and young beech trees. The setting sun shone upon the little wood and lit into a brilliant bronze the smooth bark of the beech, while it clothed in rosy splendor the slender stem of the silver birch. There was still so much of the day left that the vivid green of the young leaves glowed with a glory in part their own but in part a gift from the shining sky above, while here and there the baby bracken fern lifted its curled head and spread abroad upon either side its tender leaf. Just here within the Rectory garden color was massed upon every side. There to the right of Mr. Gray was a tall laburnum, its golden tassels made more gold where baptized by the radiant sunset, and as though to foil its graceful growth a giant copper beech spread wide branches out behind the slender tree

and at the same time caught upon its bosom a passionate kiss from the now crimsoned sky that lit its darker beauty into vivid flame; while to the left a great hedge of may-trees, beclouded with soft white, more than held its own and gave forth a silent message of chastity. Mr. Gray had been sitting long upon the terrace that topped the smooth green lawns, yet he took no note of time but let his glance fall to the little trout-stream which skirted the fields below and wound its way through the coppice, past a wilderness of mountain ash and bramble-bush and away down to the lower valley, there leaving its merry murmur as a perpetual memory within the hearts of those who heard to heed. He had always loved the sound of moving water and this evening he watched the stream as though it fascinated him. How joyous it was! How glad a song was the song it sang, and how busy it seemed to be for all that it was so light of heart! How persistently it would search and search until it found its home in the great sea! He felt the bubbling brook, for here it was no more, to be a rebuke to him. Still a very young man, endowed with much that other men might naturally covet, possessed of perfect health and sufficient wealth, was he as steadfast of purpose or as glad of heart as was this merry stream? Did he rejoice at all or make glad the lives of those who crossed his path? Did he not rather let his own sorrow outweigh all else and obstruct his onward march, while clouding also the lives of those with whom he lived? The little brook met many obstacles but always proved itself their master, growing stronger, deeper, broader as it won its way from mountain source to wide seashore, always active, never weary, a better thing it seemed and wiser than a disappointed man.

For all this let us not judge Richard Gray over harshly. To-day was akin to many another in his life and each was to him a time of sore travail, made more sore by the conviction that the thing which was, need never have been, and moreover that the fault was all his own.

Presently, he roused himself, for the little Lily was by his side and it was her hour of play. A small sweet mite of four years old, she gave promise of much future beauty and Richard remembered as he looked at her, that her mother's loveliness had brought her chiefly suffering. He prayed that together he and Priscilla might so shield and shelter that mother's child as to secure for her a wedded life of perfect happiness and freedom from all care. He had known his younger sister intimately and was aware that Lily inherited all that sister's capacity for pain. His own temperament was not unlike the child's, and it hurt him already to think that possibly ever so small a cloud should one day pass across the younger Lily's sky. The little one loved deeply at this early age, and chose the one to love herself, knowing, it seemed, already what she purposed to accept as friend, what she would reject as foe and where she meant merely to tolerate. God grant the man, whom she should one day love, prove worthy of her depth and loyalty, for Richard understood that this wee Lily by his side was to a great extent the Lily of a lifetime, whose character was more inbred than likely to be molded by events — a character that already gave color where it went rather than taking color from its near environment. The child stood there before him now distinctly different from other children of her age and class, individual though still so young,

tenacious always of that which she supposed to be her right, lavish of her very best and always loving where once she had decided to bestow her love.

They played together for a time, and Lily's little limbs gave Richard chase and drove him from the garden across the merry brook until he threw himself among the baby bracken and called a sudden halt. There Priscilla found the two, Richard with wild flowers round his neck, a daisy chain of white and gold, while Lily paddled her pink toes upon the pebbly bed of the stream all oblivious of the stones beneath her feet, as was Richard — no fisherman was he — oblivious of the trout. For the moment he was one in heart with the myriad joys of spring and the life which glowed on Lily's rosy cheeks and sparkled in her eyes. Priscilla stood upon the bank and smiled a moment on them both, then placed an open letter in her brother's hand.

"Mr. Auld can take the service and I can manage the parish very well if you would like to go," she said.

It was like Priscilla. She thought quickly and had things arranged before others had decided whether they would or would not move.

Richard looked at his sister and wondered again, as he had often wondered before, how much she knew of his love for Gabriel Grand. They were such friends, this man and woman, apart from, one had almost said in spite of, the tie of blood that lay between them, but they never had spoken together of Gabriel Grand.

"I will go," Richard said suddenly and he added, "I may as well start to-morrow. Evidently she wants you to come as well. Auld can manage the work perfectly alone, and Nana of course will take care of Lily." The Rector looked at the child and smiled.

Nana was a loving creature, but no match for Lily when once Miss Lily had set her mind on accomplishing that which she desired to accomplish. Still, no doubt the willful mite would be safe enough in the nurse's care and their visit to Gabriel Grand must be a short one, for she wrote that she was leaving Berlin in a week or two.

CHAPTER X

MEN AND WOMEN WALK AND TALK

So it came about that they went to Germany to stay for a little while with Gabriel Grand.

Now it seemed to Priscilla that the stupid past was to be obliterated, for Richard and Gabriel were together all day long and seemed to be happy every hour. Priscilla walked and talked with Frau Brandt and wondered how her brother could have let Frederick Russell step in front of him three years ago. But she knew his sensitive nature and his pride, and understood that, through a certain mental laziness, he had allowed the grass to grow beneath his feet. Gabriel's engagement had taken him by surprise and Priscilla herself had been both disappointed and amazed.

The man had always stood so far below the maid that the final *dénouement* had not, on the other hand, seemed strange to her. It is thus that men like Frederick Russell are apt to act, and probably the woman to whom he was now married suited him admirably. But what had made Gabriel Grand even at the age of seventeen suppose that she could marry such a man as he?

Ah, what? Look round the world among all nations and all kindreds and count the happy companionships among the married folk within your ken — it will not take you long — and ask until you find the

answer, for thus you will solve many another problem too, "What made them do it?"

It was during this week in Berlin that Richard Gray seemingly made a great mistake. Had he now asked Gabriel Grand to marry him, she would unhesitatingly have consented to do so, but the same want of perception, the same slowness which had made it possible for Frederick Russell to win her away from him, again held him silent when he should have spoken, and what could Gabriel suppose except that, as she had concluded long ago, he did not love her? What could she do except veil now, as she had veiled two years ago, the love which she had always had it in her heart to bestow upon him?

It was the day before Mr. Gray and his sister were to leave for England. Priscilla had gone out with Frau Brandt, and Richard and Gabriel were alone together. The instant that the door closed upon his sister Richard became aware that the crisis of his life was close upon him.

"Gabriel," he said, and moved towards her. Miss Grand turned swiftly from the window and faced him.

"Yes," she answered, and her voice was more quiet in its tone even than before, though her speech was at all times a calm and gracious utterance. Richard was now walking slowly up and down the long drawing-room. His hands clasped loosely behind him and his whole heart awake in its great anxiety. He tried to speak, tried to tell her that he loved her always—loved her so much that, do what he would, he had never for a moment been able to contemplate calmly her marriage with another man. Now he was very close to her and he mistook the sternness of her face. Men

are very stupid sometimes when it comes to reading the signals of a woman's heart, and Richard knew nothing of that pride — no man can know it — which bids some women hide their love beneath a cold exterior until the man whom they would wed shall have made perfect and complete capitulation. And a man is often inarticulate when his whole life may be altered by the utterance of his heart.

So Gabriel stood in silence close to Richard Gray and hid as best she might the storm that rose within her.

And Richard, not understanding her, not daring to hear outlined with the cruel coldness of the English tongue that which he believed he read always in the calmness of her voice and the quiet of her whole demeanor, walked past her to the window and stood there, or so it seemed to Gabriel, half a lifetime. At last he turned and spoke again for now he had mastered the moisture in his eyes and he even dared to touch her.

"Dear," he said, "I had meant to talk to you about myself, about something which has lived and lived in my heart ever since the day I first saw you. I had thought, I had hoped that I might tell you of it now, and that together we might have watched its growth, seeing it rise and deepen year by year into a greater, nobler thing, as a tree planted in a kindly soil, watered by the gentle rains and kissed by the warm sunlight, rises higher and spreads its branches wider until it shelters those who rest beneath its shade and becomes to them as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Now," he paused, for his voice shook just a little as he bade a final farewell to that which he had tried in

vain to put far from him. "Now," he repeated softly, "I understand it, this of which I meant to speak to you must be left to grow where it was born, unnoticed and alone in the silence of my heart. For the rest," Richard faced her fully now and Gabriel saw the smile upon his lips but did not see the suffering in his eyes, "I am, as I always have been, ready, nay more than that, waiting to do you every service that I may."

Gabriel in answer said nothing. What was there that she possibly could say? And Richard never guessed, how should he, that when he left her he left her to battle with a storm of tears that brought her to her knees and shook her form from head to foot.

He and Priscilla left Berlin the next day and Gabriel Grand reproached herself many times in the months that followed that she had ever consented to marry Frederick Russell. She had thereby done a great injustice, as she now saw, to others besides herself, but the experience of a girl of seventeen had been insufficient to win the day when pitted against the hereditary pride of many generations; and even now at times her face would flush at the thought that others might have guessed in those early days at Inkervale her love for Richard Gray, a man who gave no sign or token of an unusual regard for her, though coming so often to the Hall that Frau Brandt had more than once made merry at his expense. Yet as we know Richard Gray had loved her all the time, but a natural lethargy and a certain mental shortsightedness had led him to suppose at one time that the happy companionship which he and she enjoyed that first summer would continue until it should pass into a greater happiness on the day when he should ask her to become his wife; while at another time a

curious diffidence and a sensitiveness, born almost all of pride, made him fear to disturb that time of friendly intercourse which was a perpetual joy to him, fear to risk that which *was* his for a better possibility that he did not always feel sure of obtaining. "Fool!" some reader will exclaim. Perhaps! But the wisest are not always wise and in the matter of human love man is more apt to become as a feather at the mercy of a storm than in any other happening of his life, more apt to act too soon or to wait too long, for he is, though he does not know it, always a mere puppet dancing to a tune played by a power that he does not see and of which he has no knowledge at all. Thus the observer finds beneath society's smile men and women living side by side linked only by a legal tie, knowing nothing of that perpetual peace, that enduring joy born of a true companionship, which is the gift of God to those who truly love each other better than they love themselves.

CHAPTER XI

THOSE WHO WOULD JOURNEY ON.

SOME months had passed since Richard Gray and his sister had paid their short visit to Miss Grand, and Gabriel though often away was still living in Berlin. Early in the new year she had met Mr. Kelman, and of late he had frequently called upon her, so that already the gossips of her set were saying that Mr. Kelman wished to marry the beautiful English girl.

It is a pity, greater than the world wots of, that an educated man and woman cannot form a lasting friendship untrammelled by the carnal thought of a carnal world. As a matter of fact it did not occur to Gabriel Grand that she could not enjoy undisturbed an intimacy carried on with perfect openness in the eyes of all. Mr. Kelman was the most congenial and intellectual companion she had met since leaving England, older, more widely informed and cleverer than herself. No thought of marriage occurred to either. While they spoke often one to another and spent many hours in the study of the German literature, of which John Kelman possessed a deep knowledge, Frau Brandt always formed one of the party and neither Gabriel nor Mr. Kelman supposed that, while she deftly rushed her knitting needles through the strong yarns that she thus transformed into immense stockings for her tall son Ernst, her great and only treasure upon earth, the

kindly German lady was also weaving soft sentiment into the situation and planning a grand wedding for the early summer.

Frau Brandt had not anticipated, when she, a penniless widow of good birth and some education, had gone to Italy some years ago to teach the little Gabriel Grand her German alphabet, that she would still need her when a woman grown. Indeed, Miss Grand, although so beautiful, was one of those formed by natural ability and a peculiar temperament to take care of herself. Thus, a chaperon was, in her case, no more than a lay figure, judiciously placed to satisfy the wise demands of a world that does not yet love its neighbor enough to remember the inspired statement, "Love thinketh no evil." Truly they are necessary, these chaperons, mere lay figures though they be. They have but little power, and those who wish to sin will sin in subtle thought and with eyes well veiled except to the men and women of their kind; but by all means do not let us remove the chaperon while it has any power at all, but rather let us ask of it a wiser vigilance. Let us not remove that which gives even a feeble aid to those whose weakness needs protection of conventionality because it cannot rise to that perfect security that is to be found, at any hour and under all circumstances, by those who are pure in heart and holy of desire.

And so Frau Brandt watched and waited and arranged it all. How rich her beautiful Gabriel would be and how high a position she would hold! That great house among the forests of the Vosges, which Mr. Kelman filled with friends once every year, and the lovely gems that he would give his bride, and oh! the perfect palace that they must occupy when residing in Berlin. For

what cannot money buy? Yet all the time no thought of marriage entered the heart of either John Kelman or Gabriel Grand.

All their friends, and even a much wider circle, knew his story, if only in bare outline. Yet this outline, meager though it was, appeared to one as something picturesque, while to another it seemed over-tragic in its details.

Thus John Kelman was a target upon whom society turned the fire of its inquisitive attention. Married twelve years before, at the age of twenty-one, to the beauty of the season, he and his bride had been the observed of all observers, till one day Phyllis Kelman had completely disappeared. Later, the *decree nisi* which Mr. Kelman obtained was immediately followed by the news of her marriage to Lev von Gleboff, the impecunious young Russian who had enticed her from her husband's side, and until a month ago her name had been scarcely remembered. Then suddenly, Berlin had been startled by one of those shocks which make themselves felt, if only momentarily, in the minds of those that are usually callous of their brother's need.

A great disaster had occurred, and, though it took place in a far-off land, the fact that the beautiful woman upon whose smile society once had fawned, was with her husband a victim of the hour, made men and women pause and think. Both Lev and Phyllis von Gleboff had once moved conspicuously in their midst; now both were dead. But society is a mere pendulum that swings, well oiled, from side to side. Thus Phyllis was soon forgotten again, and John Kelman, whose peculiarly strict views were well known, now stood before his world entirely free; in fact, a very marriageable

man, and already the gossips gossiped loudly and noted his every word and deed. "How much he talked to the English girl! How often he walked by her side!"

The season was now well advanced and every day Gabriel became more aware that a great good gift was hers — a gift sent, it seemed to her, straight from heaven. Though both she and John Kelman were what the world would call agnostic, he was a normal man and Gabriel Grand a normal woman and the normal mortal knows, no matter what he may choose to say, that there is something better in the great design than that on which the eye can look or the hand rests daily; and thus he knows sometimes in spite of himself that a heaven does exist and that in heaven all is good.

But what was Frau Brandt to make of companionship such as this? Such courtship she had never seen. Yet she had watched "lovers" often and under widely differing circumstances. Never before had she seen two people behave as Gabriel and Mr. Kelman systematically behaved. Upon one, two, nay, a dozen different occasions she had sought to steal away and leave them quite alone together — alone, to build their wild ideals in the air, but always, one or the other had called her back. "Ach!" she muttered. "It is very strange!"

"Brandt, dear," Gabriel would say, "we cannot spare you just now. Your advice may be needed, for of course you will have to superintend the knitting department! This philanthropic scheme is a big one, you see, and Ernst must buy his stockings from our model warehouses; you will have no time to knit him any more."

"Take this more comfortable seat," Mr. Kelman had said one day, when she had made a determined effort

to escape, for lovers were dear to her feminine heart and she was ever ready to efface herself, in order to forward what she supposed to be their plans. Ah! But she had not been able to resist the kindly touch of John Kelman's hand as he led her with his usual gentle courtesy to the cosiest couch in the room. "The light is better here," he said; "and though you do not need it for your work, we like to watch you while you knit."

How she loved the man for his unvarying kindness to the dependent woman, of whom the world was apt to take but small account!

Then one day Gabriel had spoken quite plainly to her. "Dear," she said, "there are more things in heaven and earth than you wot of. Listen, I have no wish to be alone with Mr. Kelman, nor has he any wish to be alone with me. All the world may hear, if it cares to do so, what we have to say to each other."

Frau Brandt had wept a little. Her disappointment for the moment was so great. "You two are such queer people," she said testily. "No plain woman like myself can understand you or your ways."

Then she had told Gabriel of the house in which she had spent a week while on her summer holiday the year before. There the young couple were deep in a most engrossing philosophy, which, they told her, dealt with "affinities," and she had offered to procure for Gabriel the book they studied from. But Gabriel had been angry with her that day and had so frightened her that she herself lost her temper, and meeting Mr. Kelman ten minutes later had spoken to him in a rage. How sternly he too had answered her! His anger was worse than Gabriel's because so cold.

"Neither Miss Grand nor I," he said, "have any

use at all for literature such as you describe. I know nothing of it save from hearsay, the stray phrases that pass through the air of a general society, but I would cut off my hand before I would dip the tip of my finger into any such solution as that. The theory it propounds is the very opposite of the law for which I have been searching now for years, a law which I am sure exists. Man must, I am convinced, and Miss Grand feels as I do on this vital point, find his completion in a higher and a holier thing than in a mortal like himself. So, Frau Brandt," he said, still speaking in that stern voice which she had never heard before, "take my advice and read nothing until you know at least that it is pure."

Then suddenly John Kelman had turned from the window and seated himself beside her upon the great settee that occupied one end of the room.

"I have said," he spoke very quietly now and rather sadly, "I have said that I am in search of a law which I am quite certain does exist. I am certain, because at rare intervals I am overwhelmed with strong and definite convictions; but, here is the trouble, I cannot prove one of them to be true. These unshakeable convictions never leave me once they come to me, but I cannot reasonably expect any man to accept them as a part of a true philosophy, for, as I say, I cannot prove one of them and they are in most cases at variance with the material laws accepted without question by almost everyone I know."

"Some day," Frau Brandt had gently interposed, for her anger had flown at the first sound of the sadness in John Kelman's voice, "when we get to heaven we shall understand all these things."

"Some day!" Mr. Kelman repeated scornfully. "You remind me, my dear lady, of a hymn which, directly I became a man, I put away as a childish thing,

'There is a happy land,
Far, far away.'

Some day is too far a day for me, and where is this heaven of which you speak?"

Frau Brandt lifted her eyes automatically to the ceiling and replied, as she had been taught years ago to reply, "Up above!"

John Kelman laughed. "My dear lady," he said, "Where?" Then he became serious again. "No," he continued; "such vague theories are rapidly becoming relegated to the past by those who think at all. We of to-day, with mighty problems of want and woe to solve, need something more useful and more practical as a groundwork to build upon than vague intangibilities."

Frau Brandt was deeply interested. She had never thought of these things before, but to-day she wondered how she had so contentedly acquiesced in what she was now forced to admit was no more than a vague if beautiful theory.

"Tell me," she said, "some of your convictions."

John Kelman smiled. "Oh," he said, while his face lighted up and his form seemed to become suddenly more upright. "One of my convictions is that man is in reality altogether as high above that which we name man as is the spirit of man above the clay. I believe that he need not sin, and I resent decrepitude, sickness, death — all, in fact, that unfits him for his part in the citizenship of the world and causes him

instead to become a useless and often undignified member of society. I am further convinced that he need not depend, as he does, upon his brother man, but is endowed by right of an inalienable heritage with a far greater measure of ability and freedom than appears to be the case; and further that he possesses in reality a dominion over circumstances which does not often appear at all. I am certain," he added, "that there is a law which is wholly beneficent, and that the great First Cause, in the existence of which of course all sane people believe, call it what they will, is much more kind and much more just than prevalent theory and common practice would have us believe."

They talked for hours that day and it was the last time that Frau Brandt ever made any attempt to interfere in the life of Gabriel Grand. Still, womanlike, she did not give up hope. Surely there would be a grand wedding that summer or the next!

Then one day John Kelman heard something, just a word, of the chatter of his set. "The Baroness . . . wished to know when the English girl was to be married to Mr. Kelman."

She had entertained hopes of a different nature; all knew that. Hence envy barbed the tongue of idle gossip; and Mr. Kelman, being a man who knew his world, as one who watches from a height knows that on which he gazes from his vantage point, understood perfectly that idle gossip — at all times surnamed, if it had its due, interference — is apt to take a further step, swiftly if imperceptibly, and when barbed with malice quickly sink into mere carnal hatred which if unchecked can only mean slow poison, death. Yet checked it may be, and easily, for the message a fisher-

man gave nineteen hundred years ago, sweet echo of the Master's words, was given not only to those who had heard it before; the word he spake was the word of Life and he gave it forth for all time, though it is needed no more when dawns the light of God's eternity. And this is the message the fisherman gave, that we should love one another. How else may man pass from death unto life? There is no other way.

Mr. Kelman, hearing that the Baroness was still occupied with Gabriel's name and his, immediately wrote to Miss Grand, who was in Paris with Frau Brandt. Very simply, and with the straightforwardness of a child, he asked her to become his wife.

He was neither surprised nor disappointed at the nature of her reply. She had no wish, she wrote, to marry any man, but she would talk the matter over with him on her return to Berlin.

"I do not see," she said to Mr. Kelman when they met a few days later, "why a man and woman may not be simply friends, and work together for the multitude. You and I are comrades in the true sense of the word, happy when together, but quite independent of each other and not unhappy when apart. Why should the world interfere in what concerns us alone? Why may we not stand side by side as fellow-soldiers and philanthropists?"

"I suppose," John Kelman answered a little sadly, "indeed, it would appear to be quite certain, that the time has not yet come when individual man may safely move on alone in front of collective man in such a matter of convention as this. The world in general will not, indeed it cannot, accept what it does not understand, and it understands as yet but little, chiefly,

of course, because it does not want to exert itself, as a man must, in order to obtain all that is worth obtaining. Meanwhile, those who see ahead, must, I think, be patient with those whose eyes are holden, nor offend their ignorance. Indeed, those possessed of knowledge must, it seems to me, be capable of demonstrating that knowledge before it can become of practical value to their world, or even be used in safety by themselves. And I confess," he added gravely, "that I do not see how to prove many things, which I yet believe exist as beautiful and eternal truths."

Both were silent for a time, and when John Kelman spoke again his voice was deep with resolve, if a little tremulous with hope.

"See, Gabriel," he said, "it is true, aye, and part of a mighty truth. You and I are comrades who trust each other through and through. So why need we fear the marriage tie? Naturally enough I have feared to disturb the serenity of our friendship, but to-day I fear no longer, for I am sure that, whether together or apart, you and I always will be friends. I am sure also that, if we marry, we shall not lose sight of our brother's need nor sink to mere selfish enjoyment of a life of ease."

So Frau Brandt had her heart's desire, and reveled for many weeks among soft satins and rich furs, while she chose a wonderful trousseau for John Kelman's bride; nor did she experience a lesser joy when her smiling chatter was in full swing over the tea-cups or the truffles, as the case might be, while Gabriel and John passed together through a room or sat beside each other at dinner or at dance.

One day in early summer John Kelman spoke to

Gabriel of his past in a way in which he never before had spoken to a living soul. Yet it seemed inevitable that he should speak of it to her, for was it not a natural thing for him to open all his heart to Gabriel Grand? So few words were needed between these two, so very little in the way of explanation, that whatever one would say, the other, it seemed, already understood. So he told her of the great passion which had years before swept across his life and convinced him that hand in hand with the love of man and woman may walk a grim specter, Pain, for he had then learned that, however much of this love a man may give, however much he may receive, he is always yet an-hungered. For two years he and his young wife stood before the world apparently blessed with a happiness above the ordinary, and yet both he and she knew even then that through it all there ran a sense of great unrest, a craving for something more, a conscious hunger and a perpetual thirst. Most bitter of all had been the knowledge that, loving her with all the strength of his strong and early manhood, he still could not bring into his wife's life that perfect contentment, that sense of joyous rest and increasing happiness which he had supposed that his love most certainly would afford. Neither had she been able to give peace and joy to him. How could either give what neither in reality possessed? No man can impart until he has acquired. And what had the end been?

"I suppose," John said to Gabriel, "it was unavoidable, and I believe that Phyllis was subsequently a great deal happier than ever she was with me. I could not bear to take the step that I was forced to take. I had no wish for the freedom that it gave me.

I object emphatically to divorce, and still feel that I must have failed in some way to guard her as I should. Yet I would have tried for ever to make her happy. I am sure now, however, that we were both looking for joy where no real joy is to be found. Indeed, I knew that, I think, the day after I married Phyllis, and yet I continued to search and search for it, because, as far as a man and woman can truly love each other, it seemed to me that we did so. No," he repeated, "I had no wish to be free and, while she lived, I would never have married any other woman. A man does not voluntarily run the risk of passing through such a flame as that a second time, and, until I met you, I did not know what friendship was."

Gabriel understood him perfectly, and she was glad that he should have learned the lesson of those two years before his life had touched her own, for the man who has realized that things of the earth are altogether earthy inevitably stands high above his fellows and is the possessor of a freedom that no law court can confer. Thus it was through the knowledge that mere carnal love can breed no joy, and not through a *decree nisi* nor by the hand of death, that John Kelman obtained a freedom which he had naturally feared to jeopardize again.

The swift sweet growth of spring had given place to the fuller light of early summer, and the days brought to both Gabriel Grand and John Kelman a happiness that nothing ever could efface; for the attraction that served to draw their lives together had all the time an upward trend, and as the thought of each rose to a higher plane, it grew broader in its mental range, so that though these two spoke often to one another their

talk was seldom of themselves. Sometimes they would raise great castles in the air, which both knew could not take shape or form until man became a nobler thing; sometimes they formed bright prospects which surely soon could come to pass, but always each placed the other first, each gave to the other the greater good; and Frau Brandt was never forgotten. Often Gabriel would turn to her and, laughing, tell her that she would have to stop knitting those endless stockings, so large of foot, so long of limb, and start upon a greater work and one for mankind at large. As for the dear Ernst, of stockings he truly had enough.

This year Mr. Kelman went early to the Jägerthal, and as usual his aged mother awaited his arrival eagerly. A week later his friends and many relations met up there upon the mountain slopes. He welcomed all so warmly to his beautiful home, and with such genuine pleasure, that it was indeed a happiness simply to be the guest of such a kindly host.

During three weeks of wonderful weather John and Gabriel spent quiet hours among the sunlit pines. Sometimes they hardly spoke at all but would read or study silently; still, although each had a rare faculty of concentration, neither felt it as an interruption when one called upon the other to leave the book in hand and give heed to some new project.

Frau Brandt could not understand them. They made her very cross, these two. She had lived in so many homes, had seen the inside of so many lives, and she was sure that no couple in the world had ever before formed so perfect a companionship as this. Yet they were too independent all the time. She was

not clever, this dear German lady, but in the course of years she had acquired the habit of studying her neighbors closely and she was sorely puzzled now. Never a cross word did she hear pass between the two; never a cloud appeared upon their sky; a deep strong happiness, a perpetual peace seemed always to be theirs. What was the bond that bound this man and woman so closely together? Dear Frau Brandt, they would have told you if they could, but, as John said, "How put into words that which needs no words?" "How," Gabriel answered, "speak to her of that which passes her understanding and our own?"

Thus the weeks went by and into their every hour was woven for John and Gabriel a deeper and a purer love, a stronger calmer friendship for each other and a greater lovingkindness for their brother man.

It was late summer now and they were still in the Jägerthal. John's mother had pleaded that her son should lengthen his stay this time, for he was to marry Gabriel before the autumn leaves should fall, and in a week Miss Grand would have to return to Berlin, in order to make final preparations for the wedding. Day after day John Kelman spent long hours upon the mountain slopes with Gabriel by his side, although his party was large, for he was a center round which many matters of importance constantly revolved. Also he loved to happiness the lives of those with whom his own life came in contact, and he knew that a week spent at his country home was a pleasant memory that lived long in the minds of many of his friends.

To-day a wonderful summer sunshine flooded the valley's slopes and John asked Gabriel to walk to the

forester's hut with him. There they would find Felix at this hour and Mr. Kelman had some instructions which he wished to give his old retainer.

So they walked slowly through the pines and dawdled many times, for they had all the day before them and no one to say them yea or nay.

It seemed to John that he had never in all his life conceived of such happiness as that which Gabriel had brought to him. She was so quick to understand and follow every train of thought, so bold when propounding a theory of her own, so tolerant of a newer, wider view, so persistent in her search for ultimate perfection. He wondered now as he moved aside a bush, laden to the ground with the weight of its wild fruit, how he could tell her what he had brought her out to hear. John was not a vain man, because his mental attitude was of that rare order which can justly value gifts for what they are, irrespective of their setting. He knew that he had been endowed above the common and he never ceased to be glad that it was so; but it would have seemed to him a mark of ignorance had he regarded these same gifts as a purely personal possession and thus belittled them by common vanity. He realized, as he walked by Gabriel's side to-day, that he knew no other man or woman who would cultivate her less mature intelligence as he had done, and his face grew grave as they left the forester's hut, for he knew that on their homeward way he must tell her that their sweet time of friendship was swiftly drawing to a close. He had known for some hours now that this must be so, that very soon their close companionship would be suddenly severed, but still he found it very hard to tell Gabriel Grand the fiat that he had

that morning heard. Yet no one else could be allowed to whisper even a warning in her ear. Her world for a time would seem darker than it had ever seemed before, but, though he knew that what he had to say to her would bring the blackness of despair into her life, John realized that he must prove his friendship to be the child of an unselfed love by making a courageous utterance now before the actual happening should come to pass. The blow, if dealt by his hand, would fall more lightly upon her heart than he might hope could be the case should others discern the truth and speak of it to her.

They were resting among the rocks and great wild ferns, just where the pines were few and the sun's rays, slanting, fell across their feet, when John Kelman in a voice unlike his own told Gabriel that very soon he must leave her quite alone.

For a long time after he had spoken the silence on the mountain-side was unbroken and profound. It seemed to Gabriel that she would never wish to speak again. Her life was turned to a lifeless thing. And John, as he looked at her, left the moisture in his eyes unchecked, while he wondered again, as he had wondered all that day, why sorrow such as his and hers must be.

That night Frau Brandt declared to herself that her heart would break for her beautiful Gabriel. Meeting her as she entered the house that evening after her walk with John, Gabriel would not listen to her talk of marriage bells, but would have passed her by without a word, had not the simple loving lady, possessed by a sudden premonition of evil, thrown her arms about the stricken girl and held her in silence to

her breast, as many times years ago she had held the little Ernst the summer that his father died.

Two days later all that John Kelman had told Gabriel that day upon the mountain-side was known to the peasantry around, aye, and to many another far beyond his forest lands; and with scarcely a moment's warning the party at the castle scattered to their homes, leaving only his aged mother with Frau Brandt and Gabriel Grand to await the coming of John's young son and those most near to him.

CHAPTER XII

A PILGRIM'S FAREWELL

It came about on this wise.

The day had been a merry one and many noted as the hours passed that John Kelman scarcely left Gabriel's side. The gong was now about to sound and the great hall was filled with Mr. Kelman's guests. They belonged to the rich ones of the earth, these men and women of his social world. Bright gems shone amid dark waves of hair or sparkled on the white fingers of women as they held dainty fans of wonderful design. The robes these women wore were fine and beautiful, and light laughter rippled through the room. Just now an artist pressed inspired fingers on the board; then, playing softly, struck a single solemn chord. Frau Brandt raised her eyes and, searching, found her Gabriel standing far above the rest and there she saw a picture which future years could never dim. High up upon the shallow stair stood Gabriel Grand, just where the first flight branched to right and left and a wide space was floored and backed with slabs of purple marble. A single star of priceless pearls was the only jewel that she wore, while the rich satin fell from her shoulders in simple folds of gleaming white and rested softly around her feet. Though she was so tall, John Kelman bent a little as he spoke a

whispered word to her and smiled at the answer which she made, while her eyes gave back smile for smile. The artist struck another solemn chord and held firm fingers on the notes; and at that moment mirth was changed to sudden dread for there, above that joyous crowd, the hand of Death shot out and claimed a victim from their midst. Amid the perfect stillness of that lingering chord John Kelman sank upon the floor and must have lain prostrate at her feet had not Gabriel's arms met swiftly round his form while she knelt and drew his head upon her breast.

"Felix." She called the name in the tone of one accustomed to command and instantly the old retainer stood by his master's side.

"To the banquet hall," she said, and led the way. None questioned her nor asked her right to give the order. There were men there and women too, who had looked on death before, and knowing that John Kelman loved the view from the wide window of this upper room they understood why Gabriel placed him there. They laid him on a couch and wheeled it close as might be to the open casement, then left him with Miss Grand.

All bade the Jägerthal a swift farewell. They doubted not that Mr. Kelman wished to spend these last few hours alone with Gabriel Grand and those most near akin to him. He had always been a man whom others naturally obey. Yet, throughout his life, he had given few direct commands; his rule was always one of conscious love entwined with law.

Frau Brandt sat at the further end of the banquet hall sobbing softly all the time, for was not her beautiful Gabriel's heart about to break and did not she her-

self love this quiet English gentleman, almost as much as she loved her own dear son? Presently Gabriel came to her.

"We should like . . ." she said. But she could not utter another word. Her lips quivered as she spoke and then her face grew stern. The kindly lady understood and truly she was glad to go, for the sorrow in her Gabriel's eyes was more than she could bear to see.

"Can you do nothing?" she cried in quick reproach to the clever doctor who was with them from the neighboring town. "It is cruel, it is wrong that so good a man should die so young."

Herr Holtz shook his head. "I have never known anyone to recover from a seizure such as this," he answered quietly. "It is not as sudden as it seems to be, but I do not think that Mr. Kelman fully realized the danger until he sent for me two days ago."

Ah! It was this then that had stricken Gabriel to the heart and taken all the color from her face. It was this that John had told her that day upon the mountain-side.

Gabriel stood now by the open window and asked herself if this seeming tragedy were true. Had only three short hours passed since she and John stood side by side upon the central stairs? Was it true that he would never stand among them all again?

Yes! Both knew that it was true. Though accustomed to be often silent when together, at other times they had talked, while the minutes sped quickly into hours and still there was more to say, but now . . . no time in which to say it.

Gabriel Grand was faced to-day with a future which

she found herself mentally unable to contemplate — a future in which her friend could take no part. She put the picture from her and seated herself upon a low chair beside John's couch. He seemed still to heed her every movement, as he had always done, and he smiled as she rested her arm lightly on the pillow beneath his head, and looked straight into his eyes. Gabriel knew his smile so well; its strength and sweetness had become an integral part of her life, but it seemed that now she could not bear to see it on his lips or in his eyes.

"John," she sobbed; "John, do not leave me. I have no friend in all the world like you."

Her head was bent and her brow rested on the silken cushions that supported him. With a touch, gentle as a woman's, he put back the hair that lay on either side of her white forehead and when he spoke his voice was strong and the tones so tender, deep and pure that every word remained for ever a living memory in the life of Gabriel Grand.

"Gabriel, we always have been friends. My dear, we always, always will be friends throughout eternity. Where was our friendship born, where bred? Was it not in the search for good? Some time, somehow we both shall reach our goal and there stand shoulder to shoulder with the eternal good in man. What does it matter that soon each cannot see the other's face or hear the other's voice? Love, such as we know love to be, is never for a moment dependent on person or propinquity. How then can this severance of a merely earthly tie affect a love that never has partaken of the earth?"

Later he spoke again, and surely his voice was

deeper in its tone than ever it had been before: it seemed to Gabriel that it filled the banquet hall.

"I do not think," he said with the slow speech of one who weighed his every word, while the soft shadow of a strong man's grief sought to veil the dawning of a new-born joy; "I do not think that all the wealth of the English tongue can ever define that great word 'friend.' Truly all that *is* lives on forever in the spirit of a thing nor ever comes to life at all in the mere letter alone. Yet we men and women of a material age are apt to starve ourselves upon the husk nor dream that a kernal of enduring sweetness lies within. In truth," he added, "the letter and the spirit are needed by mortal man, for he must express in word as well as deed that which fills the heart to overflowing. I would, dear heart, that I could clothe the letter of that great word 'friend' with the full radiance of the soul. But, Gabriel, I know you *understand* the depth, and height, and breadth of that which we have taught each other. And I thank the great First Cause, whatever it may be, that it has so guided and so guarded us that we have never failed to answer to the upward call which our friendship made upon our every thought. Thus we have kept it, dear, always as a holy thing."

The vivid glow of that late summer bathed the great room in strong light, while John Kelman talked at intervals to Gabriel Grand.

"This great First Cause, this mighty Force for good," he said, "will pour rich blessings on your head. And see, my Gabriel, my greatest friend that I have ever had in all the world, there is much work for you, my dear — grand work for you to do, and you need not work alone. That much I know. I cannot tell you

more, for as yet I know no more myself; but I am sure that somewhere, quite close to you and me, there has always been a mighty power for good which will never leave you nor indeed anyone who looks to it for aid."

After that John did not speak for a while, but each time Gabriel moved, though it might be but slightly, he opened his eyes and smiled on her. Once she rose and stood by the wide windows looking out upon the gray and the green of the near tree tops, across the valley, into the far distance where the glowing sun now rested its golden light upon John's forest lands. Suddenly she stepped over the low sill and was gone so long that for the first time he became a little restless. Immediately she stood by his side again.

"Dear," he said, and that was all.

Gabriel had been to a distant spot in the older part of the grounds and had fetched for him a childhood's favorite that she knew he loved. In her haste she had plucked up by their slender roots an armful of the white blossom that she carried. The delicate flower was her friend as well as his, and now she placed the light petals first gently to her lips and then upon his breast.

Had he slept through the long hours of the night? Gabriel never knew. He lay quite still save that, if she moved at all, his hand would hold hers with a tightened grasp.

The early day was with them now, and John smiled brightly as he closed poor Gabriel's hands in his.

"I have a fancy," he said, "to rest beside our brook."

Felix came and with him others who loved their master well. They carried him through the first wide

belt of forest trees and placed him just where Miss Grand bade them mass the ferns into a couch, and then they left him with the English lady by his side. A minute later a man's sob fell suddenly on the morning air as old Felix stumbled blindly through the thicket, on and on till he knew himself to be alone. There he waited till Miss Grand should call him to his master's side again. She would know where to find him just where he had stood to teach John Kelman, then a little lad of ten, the first that he had ever learned of forest lore.

"I wish," John spoke and still smiled with lips and eyes, "that I had the tongues of men and of angels with which to thank you, dear, for all that you have done for me."

Frau Brandt would come to them at intervals and with her once she brought the white-haired mother to bid him a last farewell.

"I have never," she whispered, as she knelt later by the open window in the silence of her room and watched the coming of a brilliant noon, "I have never seen a death like this. It seems to me that here the grave will have no victory. The man's dear face already is like a little child's. It seems as though he could not die."

Now the sun was higher and shone full upon the couch where John Kelman lay. Gabriel asked herself, had she ever seen so pure a brow as his? She knew more than anyone else ever had known, or ever could know, of the mental throes of which this serenity was born, but no trace of them was here to-day. Not one line was visible, nor did a single shadow rest upon the calm face. Deep thought there was in the grand eyes and strength of character in the man's firm mouth,

but the tempest of life was stilled, for the battle with desire had long ago been quenched in the heart of John Kelman. Only a perfect and perpetual peace ruled his being now, and as she watched him Gabriel saw that to him death was merely a milestone on the road of life.

"John," she said rising suddenly, "this new philosophy of which you meant to tell me, is it that which makes your way so easy now?"

"Had I but had the time to search it more deeply," he replied, "it would have done more than that for me, for, as I understand it, I have at last come face to face with Truth."

"Oh, John, and is there no time for you to tell me of all that you have found? John! John! She called to him loudly now, for her watch had been a long one, and of this she had not known before. That John was leaving her she knew, but now it seemed he was leaving her to start alone upon a mighty quest — the quest for a Truth which he, it seemed, had found.

"John," she sobbed, "what is it you have made your own? Is there not time to share your peace with me?"

No! There was not time. John Kelman had said almost all that he might say to Gabriel Grand. He sent for Felix now and they carried him to a more open space beyond the circle of young pines and laid him there upon a fresh couch of summer ferns that the old man had gathered, while the English lady sat by his master's side.

"My master," he had muttered as he watched the while from afar, "for all he loves the books so well, was always one to have the breath of the summer about his path and a mountain breeze upon his brow. I'll bring

him here at noon and lay him on this fresh fern bed — here, where the view is far as the eye of a man may reach; here he shall lie with a dome of blue above his head and the slopes of the valley beneath his feet.”

So Felix laid John Kelman on the bed of fresh green fern and sought to hide from him his breaking heart. “You’ll send for me, my master, when the shadows slant across the grass. I’ll leave you with your English lady now.” Old Felix plunged into the wood again, treading the brambles roughly down. Once he turned and stood for a moment upright beneath a great fir-tree, seeming himself to be a part of the forest he loved so well, while Gabriel, looking, saw in his eyes the pain as of a wounded deer.

“Come back!” she ordered quickly, for John had signified his wish to her.

“Felix, my man, good-by.”

Thus spoke the master and, while the servant knelt sobbing like a little child, John Kelman lifted his hand and rested it on the man’s bare head.

“Ah, master!” Old Felix knelt on both knees now and kissed John Kelman on the brow, as he had kissed him years ago when a little lad in trouble for the moment.

That was all there was to say between these two. Friends they were and had been for nearly half the lifetime of a man, and now Felix would not stay to see his master die.

“I’ll stand by the forester’s hut to-day,” he said, “and your lady will whistle for Felix thrice and he will come to her and you. See,” he said to Gabriel, “his knife and keys are here and the whistle lies beside them. No one else must do for him. I’ve minded

him now near thirty years. . . . Master!" He knelt again and whispered one word in John Kelman's ear, then kissed him softly as a gentle woman might have done, then strode across the mountain track, nor stayed his steps until he reached the shelter of the hut.

Now John was alone with Gabriel Grand, alone with the vast dome of the heavens above and the wide wild country all around.

"Gabriel."

She knelt and put her hands on his. Scarcely less calm than he, she smiled upon him as he rested there on the fragrant bed. This man and woman had seen so clearly always eye to eye, and in death they were not to be divided.

Now John's eyes were filled with sudden gladness and Gabriel knew that his journey through the valley of the shadow was almost done. She bent a little nearer to him, for his voice, though clear and strong withal, was very low; and Gabriel took those last four words he said and held them always in her heart:

"Gabriel, my friend, good-by."

"John," she answered swiftly, while still his eyes and hers might meet and smile into each other's, "there is a God. I know it now. That wonderful philosophy for which we searched, which you have found, is true. There is a God and He is good and *here*, quite close to you and me."

"John," she cried, while still he could hear a message from the earth, "listen to me. I am glad, I am glad, that the touch of hand upon hand, of lip upon lip, was never mine and thine. Had it been so for a moment, dear heart, I must now have lost my friend."

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While the day was young and the dew still heavy on the grass, Gabriel left the Jägerthal. For what reason should she stay? To watch an aged woman's grief? To see deep sorrow in a child's young eyes? Nay, she would go quickly, before the son of Phyllis and of John should come in answer to the swift message that Felix had sent too late.

The old retainer remained by his master's side, while night passed into day and day into night again. The lord of the forest now lay in state, but the English lady had left the castle long ago; she would not stay to see the careless eye gaze on the form which man had named John Kelman.

Once only she entered the banquet hall and placed fresh flowers on his breast and framed his form in white; then knelt by the window and lifted her arms as she opened them wide to the dawning day.

"Felix," she cried, "listen to me, for thus shalt thou grieve and greet no more. I tell thee the truth, and a mightier truth than ever thou hast heard before, though I know not whence it comes to me. That cold clay with its waxen face and its merely fleshly form was never the man that we loved. Ah no!" And now, forgetful of Felix, whose faithful watch never ceased by his master's couch, she spoke into the dawn as it deepened the sky with the light of a summer's day.

Let us ask no question of that hour. Rising, Gabriel lifted her face to the dew-laden breeze as it blew from the mountain top. Once again she opened her arms and raised them on high as though to embrace the unseen; then whispered a while of the friend of her life.

Frau Brandt was glad to take her away and hastened the journey as best she might, for she, plain woman that

she was, could not comprehend such dry-eyed grief as this. "She called him friend . . . yet never a tear! Only a face as white as the wild white rose and gray eyes deep with the shadow of pain dark as the distant purple peaks. Why does she not weep, as a woman should weep, when her heart is like to break? Why does she not speak, as a woman should speak, of that which possesses her soul?"

In truth it seemed to her kindly friend that Gabriel Grand was half a man, yet wholly a woman too, for she bore her grief as a man bears his in a silence both still and stern, yet carried a woman's pain in her eyes and the hush of a sorrow-filled life in her voice.

Yes, Gabriel grieved for John. How should it have been otherwise? The mountain path that they had meant to climb together she now must scale alone, and Gabriel, for all she was so silent in her woe, was chiefly feminine and hungered often for a courage greater than her own and a strength which would grow the stronger when confronted by a foe. This courage and this strength John Kelman had supplied, and now she must fight alone. She fought for a time as one fights who knows not where he stands nor the nature of his foe. She would not read the new philosophy that John had found to be the truth, for she could not see her way alone, it seemed; she needed John to guide her thought and hold it to a height as high as this. So she laid aside her only hope of peace and searched the world for what it could not give.

Thus the human mind reacts and overacts and has no fixity at all, until it rises to that altitude where man leans not upon his brother man but rests his all in God. So Gabriel Grand, bereft of John, found no firm foot-

hold beneath her feet, until one day she stood where all must stand, upon the firmament of Mind, and heard, as all one day will hear, the voice of God speak as it spake to the meekness of Moses long ago, face to face "as a man speaketh unto his friend." But this day had not yet dawned for Gabriel Grand, and much must come to pass before she might find for herself that true philosophy that John had seized so quickly for his own and taken with him, a bright and guiding star, through the valley of the shadow.

So time passed over Gabriel's head, and though she had as yet no anchor for her soul still each day left her higher than the last, for there are men and women who by reason of their very nature must rise upon the wing or die. And so it came to pass in God's good time, in God's good way, that one day Gabriel knew forever that friendship is a higher thing and holier than can be understood by one who dares to outline by finite form or personal mentality the Master's teaching of the incorporeal.

CHAPTER XIII

THIS ALSO IS THE DREAM

GABRIEL GRAND was still quite young when she brought Frau Brandt home again to Inkervale.

"Here," she said, "you can always rest should I wish to wander far afield, and your big Ernst can come to you if I leave you often alone."

Then almost immediately a letter reached the Hall which bade her come in haste to St. Petersburg to see the woman who had been John Kelman's wife.

Gabriel had learned soon after John died that Phyllis von Gleboff still lived. A confusion of names, it appeared, had occurred when that far-off disaster took place, and for a while neither Mme. von Gleboff nor her husband knew that they had been reported dead. Then, "What matter?" Phyllis had said. "There is no one at home who will care."

She wrote to Gabriel now, an urgent letter. "She must see her," she said. John's mother, of course, had charge of the child, but since his death had allowed the boy to spend some months in Russia under Phyllis' care. John would have wished it so. This much Mme. Kelman had written to Gabriel; further, she knew he had always sent the child to Phyllis for six months of every year, until she left with von Gleboff for China. So the little David had wintered each year by his mother's side. Now, she wrote to Gabriel she lived

in St. Petersburg again and the child was with her once more.'

Miss Grand's journey was a long though rapid one. Arrived in the Russian capital, she drove at once to her destination. Gabriel Grand had never before visited Russia and she was now naturally impressed by the breadth of the beautiful street in which Phyllis von Gleboff lived. The Nevsky Prospekt stretches for several miles in a perfectly straight line at right angles to the River Neva. Miss Grand had driven down the Bolishaya Marskaya and had admired the many fine buildings as she passed. Here the gentlemen of Russia meet at their clubs; she had now, it appeared, reached that quarter of the town in which the very wealthy and those of noble birth resided.

It was winter and the Neva, just here several hundred yards in width, was frozen perhaps ten feet deep.

In accordance with the usual custom fir-trees had been cut down and brought in from the country. They were now upright upon the icebound river, each in the place selected and held there by the frozen surface of the water. Planted thus in a double line and at regular intervals across the Neva they formed an avenue which directly connected the Nevsky Prospekt with the Vessiluvski Ostrov or Vassili Island where, the *koocher* informed Miss Grand, the English population chiefly resided. Street lamps erected between the trees were now alight, and the busy traffic crossed the river by means of these improvised ice roads to which it descended by inclines built upon either side of the Neva as soon as the winter really held the land.

Miss Grand ordered the driver to draw up for a few moments while she watched with interest a scene so

new to her. Fires were alight in most of the principal streets and offered a grateful warmth to the passer-by, as also to the police on duty, and sleighs coming in from the country laden with fuel would stop, Miss Grand observed, in order to throw down a replenishing log as they passed the fires.

As she entered the large gates which fronted Lev von Gleboff's residence and drove into the paved courtyard, the *dvornik* noted, as his office demanded that he should, the English stranger, and he was careful to make further inquiry about her, though he had been duly informed of her expected arrival.

It was night when Gabriel Grand stood alone in the great town house awaiting the advent of Phyllis von Gleboff, who had not been at home when she arrived. Presently the woman whom John had wedded over twelve years ago stood before her, and almost she exclaimed, for she had never guessed at beauty such as this, in spite of all that he had told her. Phyllis von Gleboff did not move, but drank deeply of the admiration which Miss Grand made no effort to conceal. It would have been unnatural to her to do so. Long ago she had formed a habit of regarding the person of a man or woman much as she regarded a statue or a picture, but she had never seen a woman who so perfectly understood the power of her loveliness or knew, as Phyllis did, how best to foil and frame it.

"Please sit down," her hostess spoke slowly. "I have so much to say to you and not much time in which to say it. To-morrow I start for China; my husband has already gone. We are very rich now, but," she laughed; "not rich enough, so he has gone to

the East to make more money. We spend a great deal, you see."

Miss Grand rejected the low arm-chair near which she stood and crossed the room, then seated herself in a larger one that seemed to her to form no part of the luxurious furniture with which the house was filled; but the high straight back, wide seat and upright arms were more restful to her just now than the softer seats on every side. She remained silent, waiting for her hostess to make good the words which had brought her so swiftly across the Continent.

Mme. von Gleboff watched her guest for fully a minute, but when at last she spoke Gabriel understood why it was not easy for her to begin the conversation; it held for both an issue of much moment.

"I felt quite sure," Phyllis spoke even now with difficulty, "that you would come, for I told you in my letter that it is for John's sake that I wish to see you. He told you, of course, of our hasty marriage and also . . . of the end."

Miss Grand bent her head. She had no idea why she was here, no idea why this woman wished to see her; above all she did not understand her evident knowledge of her own friendship with John Kelman, and quite consciously she resented this knowledge.

Phyllis von Gleboff was speaking rapidly now, and it seemed to Gabriel that the whole world was silent while she spoke. It was late and the household, with the exception of these two, was doubtless asleep; but, while the sea gave up its dead just there, it seemed to Gabriel that even the midnight hum of a great city was suddenly and completely hushed. Phyllis, born an

Englishwoman, but bred abroad, had remained English only in the purity of a cultivated voice, her thought and action were both foreign to the country of her birth.

"I do not know," she cried, "why I should bare my soul before a woman such as you, and yet I feel compelled to do it."

She stood very close to Gabriel Grand and bent towards her chair. So close, she stood, so low she bent, that the anger in her eyes shone upon the eyes below her.

"I do not know," she repeated once again, "why I should speak the truth to you. I am not apt to speak the truth, unless it suits my purpose better than a lie, and I have never hated anyone in all my life as I have hated you. Yes, always quite consciously, though often I have feared that my hate would kill not you, but me. I have hoped, I still do hope, that it will kill you first, but there!—as well be hung, if hung one must be, for a sheep as for a lamb. I will tell you why I hate you all the time. I will tell you this because I think that it will hurt you through and through, and I long to give back pain for pain. See!" And suddenly while Gabriel sat there clothed in the silence of a perfect calm, the pent-up storm of many years broke around her, as Phyllis von Gleboff lifted her hand and smote her suddenly on the brow. "See!" she cried. "I neither fear nor do I love you, sweet Madonna though you be; your smooth brow is not the shrine at which women such as I are wont to worship. Your saintly eyes with their deep glow and purple shadow do not bid me climb to any mountain-top; rather do they drive me faster down the hill; for I, and women such as I, love best the lowland plains. What is your

beauty or your wealth compared to mine?" she cried. "What is your wit and where your power compared to mine? Can you keep a dozen men and more round you all the time, mere slaves beneath the brightness of your repartee? Why should such an one as I be jealous of such an one as you? Only because, if all the princes of the earth were prostrate at my feet, I still should crave for more. I suppose," she added sullenly, in tones of deeper wrath, "it is as a madman craves for drink that I crave the worship of a world, and still should crave for more—a constant, constant gnaw which seems to tear the vitals out, which nothing ever satisfies, nothing soothes nor satiates. Ah!" she stood now at the far end of the room and cried aloud. "Ah! You know now why I hate you all the time. Yet . . . I know the madness of it well enough, for why should such an one as I be jealous of such an one as you?"

Gabriel Grand stood silent and calm beneath the torrent of irrational contempt that the maddened woman poured upon her. Her hand was upon the open door. At the moment when Phyllis struck her it seemed to her that her whole life was stilled. Then she rose to a fuller consciousness of pain than ever had been hers before. This poor creature there before her, was she mad or was she sane? No matter which; once she had been John Kelman's wife; once she had been loved by him.

Miss Grand watched her as she paced the spacious room, then left her as she turned again at the farther end.

"To-morrow," said Gabriel, "we will talk. To-night there is nothing to be said."

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Was she mad or was she sane? Thus Phyllis questioned of herself as Gabriel left the room. Who shall answer a question such as that? One day each individual heart must bare itself before the mental gaze and know foul egotism's foulness, aye, and all its folly too.

To-night this woman tossed and turned at the mercy of the storm to which she herself had given birth — which she herself had nursed and nurtured — and she was as one bereft of reason and of righteousness.

"John," she cried, "some day you shall come down and back to me; I cannot bear that you should stand so high with that white saint beside you. I will not rest, I will not rest till I have dragged you both to hell and crushed my heel upon your head and hers. I love not the light in those Madonna eyes, for I believe it glows the deeper since it caught its depth from out your own. I love not the peace of her pale brow, for I believe your hand has smoothed its care away. Some day, some day those eyes shall weep for a woman's woe, some day that brow shall wear a diadem of shameful shame."

Gabriel Grand, alone in her room, thought too of John, amid the sacred quiet of a soul at peace with all the world.

"Some day," she whispered as, from the open casement by which she stood, she watched the soft light of the dawn, "some day those on earth will rise to heaven; then shall all men love the good."

An hour later the nobility of selfless love lifted her in the scale of life, till she stood where her outstretched hand might even reach and bless the one who hated her. "And Phyllis too," she said, still speaking to the

silence of her heart, "Phyllis too will rise in time and find her joy in good."

The household still slept, but Gabriel sat upon the low couch by the window waiting for the fuller day, when she found that Phyllis stood beside her. But was this the woman of five hours ago, this white vision with sorrow in her eyes?

"Come," Phyllis spoke so gently that Gabriel marveled as she rose to follow her. "Come," she repeated, "and I will show you why I sent for you so hurriedly."

She led the way across the wide landing and presently opened a door softly. She stood for a long time upon the threshold with her head bent upon her breast, while the tears fell rapidly from her blue eyes, just now like the eyes of a child who makes no effort to restrain its grief.

Gabriel was astonished and perplexed. Her nature was direct and naturally controlled; and she wondered at this woman, for she could not follow her complex mind nor understand its rapid turn from callous cruelty to deep distress.

Phyllis von Gleboff turned and took her hand, and Gabriel found that her touch was tentative and full of fear.

"Please." It was a new voice that pleaded, and Phyllis drew the younger woman slowly towards a small wooden bed; then, watching her with a desperate anxiety, she swiftly drew the light quilt down.

Gabriel Grand knelt suddenly and asked herself, could this strange thing be true? Lived there another in all the world with the face and form of John?

"John told you," Phyllis spoke in whispers as her trembling lips allowed, "of the last instructions that he

wrote for his mother? No?" Mme. von Gleboff paused, but she had gone so far and Miss Grand's disconcerting eyes were fixed upon her. "I suppose," she added, "that he left it till the last, and then, I understand, there was but little time to talk. He knew that he must shortly die, it seems, and he left directions," she spoke hurriedly now, though in more careful tones, "saying that he desired that his son should grow up an Englishman, and that he wished him placed with you when ten years old. After that David's grandmother must leave the boy's education in your hands. I am not willing to have it so, but . . . I am powerless to prevent it." She wept again and strangled the quick sobs that shook her form. "He will not care," she said bitterly, and pointed to the sleeping child. "He does not love me in the least. How should he? He is his father once again. When he wakes you will look once more into the eyes of John. And John . . . never loved me, though he thought he did. He could not. Saints on earth pity, but they do not love poor sinners like myself. The boy is just the same. He looks at me and wonders at my rage . . . and then he turns, as John would always turn at last, and leaves me by myself. He drives me to and fro, this duplicate of John. Sometimes I love him through and through, sometimes I think I hate, hate him till I wonder that he does not die. It is well for him that I must part with him. My husband too is glad it should be so. The boy, now that he is older, does not suit our life at all. I wonder," she faced Gabriel for a moment and watched her with a certain furtive keenness, "that you never saw the child; he spent some months out of each year beneath his father's

roof. John doted on the boy. How came it that you never saw him then?"

"John spoke of David sometimes," Gabriel replied; "but I never saw him. I lived in Berlin and the boy came to the Jägerthal when John's guests had left the castle. It always seemed to me," she added, "that it was John's habit to look forward to the future which should still unfold, rather than to dwell upon the present or the past. I think he kept David very close within his heart, rather as a woman keeps a precious thing too sacred for the world to gaze upon, but the child's future was, I know, his one anxiety."

"Yet he never told you of these instructions, the last he left about the boy?" Phyllis gazed keenly at Miss Grand. Untrue herself, she doubted another's truthfulness.

Gabriel remembered well that John had told her that day upon the mountain-side of an important decision that he had made, and further he had said that he wished to speak of it to her. Afterwards the quiet moments had been few, and she had no doubt that the instructions now in the hand of David's mother dealt with the matter to which John had then referred. So be it. John had desired that his child should live with her and she was very glad that she might do this much for him.

So it was that David Kelman came to make his home with Gabriel Grand, and the story of his life henceforth will show the earnest seeker after better things that the innate good in man but needs a kindly soil and the gentle rain of God to blossom into beauty and ultimately bear a fruitage abundant, rich and good. Ay, no matter how adverse the circumstances that may surround its

early years, nor how angry the elements that seek to control its fate; for what, after all, are these detonations of the carnal mind? Merely temporal happenings born of passion, bred in pain, ever at war with Good, against which they but dash themselves to die, for Good alone is Life, and alone gives life to man.

CHAPTER XIV

LITTLE FEET ON LIFE'S HIGHWAY

So Miss Grand brought David Kelman home to Inker-vale, and marveled at the thing which, without volition of her own, had so quickly come about. Why had not John's mother informed her of his wish? No matter. It was perhaps displeasing to her that her grandchild should leave her guardianship and become the ward of a woman whom she herself had known for so short a time. Be that as it may, the whole current of a life was suddenly changed and David Kelman would now grow up an Englishman. He spoke Russian, French, German and English, as do many children of the wealthy brought up in Russian cities. His old nurse was a German; always faithful to her wayward charge, she had followed Phyllis to her new home when she married John, and later, when she became von Gleboff's wife, Griselda had begged that the baby David might not be taken from her. The English Gertrude Phyllis had found one winter in Berlin, and her own maid spoke always to the child in French. Phyllis was no thoughtful mother exercising an unusual care, but David had, as we know, spent six months of every year with her until she had first left Europe, and she merely followed, in the matter of his education, the custom of the country in which she lived. Certainly it is a custom that has much to commend its use, and David Kelman easily became a

fluent linguist at an early age. Later he learned the charm of literature which otherwise must have remained a sealed book to him; nor could he have acquired that deeper insight into the customs of countries other than his own which a man may easily gain once he has mastered the native tongue, thus adding breadth to his experience and expansion to his thought.

But at the age of ten he had almost everything to learn, for the long winters had been spent for the most part by old Griselda's side. There he had listened to her talk of their early German home and wondered why they left Berlin, but here Griselda would always find that her glasses must be dusted, they had grown so dim, or she would say that she must read to him, or that it was time for him to run to Gertrude for his game of play. Still he did not understand why his mother's name was von Gleboff, instead of Kelman, like his own, nor why they lived in Russia in Lev von Gleboff's house. Griselda spoke often to him of his father, with whom he had always stayed once every year up in the Jägerthal. How the child had loved those summers on the mountain slopes, when Felix and he had wandered all day long! John he had not understood, though he had loved the deep quiet of his voice and felt always safe beside him. But John was grave and read so many books, and David was a very little lad, who wanted to be free to roam with Felix through the woods. So John had let his son's early childhood pass, waiting for the fullness of a future time, when, boy or man, David should need his father by his side and turn to him to satisfy each growing need.

Then just a year ago, while David played by the sea, there had come the summons from the Jägerthal that

he watched for every year, but this time Felix sent a telegram, and Griselda, reading the short page, had lifted up her voice and wept, then given him a hasty order; his spade and bucket had been cast aside. His father wanted him at once and he must go that minute to the train! Later, Felix had written a letter which his father's valet had brought to meet them on the way, but, when David knew what that letter contained, he had torn and trampled on it.

"It is not true," he shouted, and his eyes were dark with the passion and the pain that paled his face. "It is not true. My father is not dead," he cried. "He wants me every summer in the Jägerthal."

So David as the age of nine had protested, as in some form or other childhood always does protest, against that which robs it of its right.

But this we know had taken place a year ago, and David Kelman was in England now, living with Gabriel Grand and asking her questions of his father, whom always they both called "John." She knew now that it was for this that she had waited, the attentive ear and loving heart of a little child. She could speak to David of the past which had lain silent for so long. Soon the boy knew his father much better than he had ever known him before. Between them Gabriel and he built up a wonderful ideal of all that a man should be, and to the growing lad this ideal was a man who actually had been and therefore might be again. Gabriel knew that only added years could have brought to John Kelman much of the grand maturity with which the child's pure affection clothed him now, but she did not say to David that his father was less perfect than his boy's brave fancy painted him, for she saw that he

meant one day to be all that he supposed John had been. She herself would sometimes wonder, as she went about the world, whether added years would have deepened or dimmed the beauty of that noble character. Often she would be sick at heart and weary for the wide knowledge which John Kelman had possessed and the intellectual intercourse that she had known when with him; and she would ask herself whether these other men and women whom she met to-day had not once stood as high as he but finally had grown tired of a fruitless effort to lift their environment to the level on which they stood themselves.

It was only occasionally that she could be with David, for the school she selected lay in the north, and she left the boy as free as might be to find his feet and plant them step by step upon the ladder of life.

The Rev. Richard Gray, watching her in holiday time, would sometimes marvel at her ways. She seemed to be both father and mother to the lad; there, ready when need arose with all a mother's tenderness to chase a childish trouble away, yet ready also to stand aside and let her nursling prove for himself that youth and wisdom do not always run in leash, but that the former needs often to bow low the head before the latter may crown the brow.

So David learned big lessons from each childish fall, and knew in time that Gabriel was his greatest friend in all the world, for, though she sometimes let him hurt himself a little, she was always there beside him when he looked to her, and always waiting to bind up his self-inflicted wounds.

So two years passed and David Kelman at the age of twelve was a bonnie lad enough.

"I wonder," Richard asked of Gabriel as they watched the boy with quiet patience fling his fly upon the stream, "what Lily and he will say to one another. Both are so individual and both so sure they are right. I am afraid that Priscilla has not had your courage with her charge. She argues with our little Lilian and always gets the worst of it, for Lily is clever and she is not."

Gabriel smiled. "It is odd that the children have not met before, but I have always taken David with me on my travels in his holidays, and Priscilla is convinced that the seaside is a sheer necessity each summer for a little girl."

What did David say to Lily when, an hour later, he saw her standing on a great stone wall? Why, he said nothing, because, as might have been expected, Lily said so much.

"Hullo, boy! You'll just do. The ladder has fallen down on the other side, and I want my tea."

What did she mean? For what would he just do, to serve as a ladder or . . . a tea? This sprite, escaped it would seem from the woods, did not particularize. This hybrid growth of forest and field stood there upon the top of the high wall apparently expecting him to make the next move, whereas he felt suddenly stupid and quite unable to do anything but look at her.

The child seemed made of the sunshine; it drenched her bright blue overall, which she had wound around her waist, it bathed her golden hair in light and found its home amid the laughter in her eyes. Wild roses were on her head and golden buttercups round her neck, while giant daisies filled her hands. From the woods

she had stolen a monster fern and plaited and re-plaited it till it formed a mimic sword.

"Boy!" The sprite spoke now in a peremptory tone. "There goes the tea-bell; don't you hear?"

Yes, David heard, but what of that?

"Come on and get me down, or Nana will say it's all my fault again. I'm always late for tea."

And whose then was the fault? Had Nana or had he placed the sprite wall-high and tumbled the gardener's ladder down the farther side? David felt bewildered. He was a simple creature and nowhere in an argument, nor was he gifted with a clever tongue. Yet he was no fool when it came to action, and in the end the score was on his side, for Lily found herself upon the ground, being run at full speed along the terrace, before she had quite decided whether she would or no. And Lily was accustomed to decide most things for herself.

"Boy," she panted, then stood still, "I will not run so fast. Let go my hand."

"But Nana," David smiled, "will say it's all your fault if you are late for tea." And the boy's dark eyes were full of fun as he looked down upon the small brown hand he held. It was covered with the green of the fern and the soil of the woods, and Nana would surely make its owner wash it well before she would give them any tea.

"Oh, Nana!" And Lily swung her supple form away and disappeared, while David stood and watched the place where she had been.

So Lily entered the life of David Kelman, and made for herself upon the instant a nest within his heart, which he kept warm for her throughout all time.

Some natures are like that. They do not hover for a moment, take just a sip and give a passing gleam of butterfly wings in return. Lily had decided that David would just do and Lily was not apt to change her mind. She made it up too certainly and never doubted where once she had decided to trust. While David — why, David was just a simple creature, faithful because he could not be less; true, because he could not lie; and loving because even then he knew that love alone is life. That was why, when Felix had sent that letter by the valet's hand and Griselda had lifted up her voice and wept, that he had cursed. Not with coarse words, such were unknown to him, but what of that? A thing may be condemned without the aid of a single word, and David had condemned with a child's direct discernment that which had robbed him of both life and love.

Now he and Lily ate their tea and talked of all that they would do before David must go back to school. That summer was a glad one and many a like one followed it.

So the years passed on, and soon David would be a man, while Lily remained a child. Three times every year they had spent the weeks together, sometimes at Inkervale, sometimes with Gabriel in Switzerland or traveling through the Lakes. Once, a never-to-be-forgotten time, all had spent a month in Norway, and Lily had marveled how David could waste hour after hour so quietly beside a river bank. She herself was seldom still, but roamed for miles alone, then brought her treasures home to David first and Gabriel secondly. Still a child of forest and of field, no weather could prison her active limbs within four walls, no book could

wean her from the earth and sky. Were two creatures ever less alike? Did ever two playfellows trust each other more? Gabriel would sometimes wonder, knowing David as she did, whether she was right to let him shepherd Lily all the time. The boy was, she could see, father to the man that one day David would become. His steadfast nature grew more steadfast every year and where he loved he lived. He had taught the wilder Lily almost all she knew, quite all she knew of patience and of toil, for both were foreign to her, as is stately action to the dragon-fly. Each year she grew more bright and beautiful, and each year, as Gabriel clearly saw, David loved her more. He made no secret of his love to Gabriel Grand. Why should he do so? Was she not his greatest friend in all the world, and did she not always understand when he spoke to her, as a boy can seldom speak to man or other boy? Why should he, and how could he, hide from Gabriel that which was as natural to him as is the daylight to the day? It was for Lily that he had won his colors, for Lily that he had mastered Cicero. Not that she cared at all for Cicero, but she did care greatly that David should be "top boy" and win a wonderful scholarship. She herself was well content when Frau Brandt let her leave her lesson and run away to play, but she understood quite well that boys must work as well as play, and often she had made the too grave David smile by some sober admonition, which he well knew that she herself would not obey. It was for Lily's sake that David strove to keep his language always pure, even when she was far away at Inkervale and could know nothing of what he did while at his public school.

It was summer again now and Gabriel had brought

them both to fish upon the Highland lochs. Lily would never catch a salmon of course; it was sufficient if she kept still enough not to frighten David's fish away.

They were later in returning to-day than Gabriel had supposed would be the case, and the weather much rougher than when they started with their gillie hours ago, and suddenly Miss Grand became aware that she was very anxious to have them safely back with her.

"Get me a cart," she ordered. "I will drive and meet them on the road."

Lily was so seldom still. How foolish she had been to trust her in a boat with only David and the gillie in authority to check her in a thoughtless mood!

"What of the weather, Sandy? Hadn't we best be going home?"

David spoke quickly, for he had only suddenly awakened to the knowledge of the threatening clouds and stiffening breeze.

Sandy was willing enough to bend to his oars and speed the boat across the lake, but where was the little lady whom they had landed on the further bank, there by the open wilds?

Each took an oar and soon they found the spot where they had landed Lily. Scarcely was the keel upon the ground before David sprang ashore, for he was certain now that foul weather had come to stay.

"Lily!" he shouted, and waited just long enough to listen for a swift response, then ordered Sandy to go southward down the lake while he should search the upper shore. "The child," he said, "will sometimes race for miles across a country even such as this, and she takes no note of time. In an hour it will be dark

to-day, unless these clouds should lift and break — and she has only her summer clothing on. She will be drenched from head to feet.” And then he laughed, even in the midst of his anxiety, for Lily would not care a pin, he knew, if the rain should soak her through. She was searching for white heather and for a lichen which she loved, and would not stop for wind or weather.

“Lily!” He shouted often as he ran, and still the clouds grew darker overhead and all the country for miles around was strange to him. Should he wander far inland, how find the boat again once the darkness came upon him?

David did not know himself. It seemed to him that he had searched for hours yet was no nearer finding Lily than he had been at first. The rain poured down in torrents on his uncovered head, for he had snuggled his cap upon his breast so that Lily might have that much at least of comfort when they met; her tam o’shanter must be drenched by now. His coat was thick and still not wet upon the inner side, it would be nice and warm for her if he should find her soon.

“Lily! Lily!” He stood upon a giant rock and framed his mouth between his hands. The child, for all her pluck, would be tired out and as usual she had been late for tea and so had gone without.

David blamed himself for his carelessness. His sport had occupied his mind while Lily, whom he knew was wild with joy at the freedom of the Scottish moors, needed his thought and care. He was wont to chide himself at times, but never before so roundly as this. What manner of man was he that could not watch a child for an hour?

The nights up here were short and usually quite light, but now the world for miles around was canopied with cloud, and David could hardly see a yard. Lily's coat lay, as he knew, beneath the bow-seat of the boat and she was thinly clad. He wished the season were a warmer one; the wind blew from the northwest and chilled him with its blast, while the clouds above his head were at one in their efforts to shroud the earth. Even he was wearied with the lifting of his feet where the heather grew so tall. Lily must by now be faint for want of food. Poor little lass! It was all his fault this time.

"Child!" He shouted and waited while the gale caught up his word and sped it onward through the night. Lily would surely hear that cry, the name by which he alone might call her and even he only when she would.

"Child! I have searched the moor all night and you are very late for tea."

Thus, with the joke of years ago upon his lips and his heart sore for Lily's need, David strode across the rough hillside and longed for the sound of her voice. Suddenly he stood quite still, then held his breath and waited longer, it seemed to him, than he ever had waited for anything to come about. Ah! At last! He was sure now that it was Lily that he had heard, calling to him through the darkness, and immediately his action betokened no uncertainty. Up and on, right forward there, no matter what the next step held for him. What if the child's voice sounded strange to him? What if he missed a something that it always held? What if it held a something now which he had never heard in it before? It was Lily who had cried

to him from amid the dreary darkness of the night. That was enough.

"Child!" David spoke quite softly and stood still, his right foot resting on a rock. How did he know she was so close to him? Why speak so softly, while the wind still raged storm high? David Kelman asked no question of himself, but waited, a year, as it seemed to him, till Lily should answer him. Yet, when she answered, almost it was more than he could bear, for he had never heard her sob before in all the years that they had played together. Her nature was a sunny one, his the graver of the two, though often he would catch the spirit of her fun, and for the moment make it half his own.

"Child!" he whispered the word again and knelt just where he stood, then drew her to his breast and folded his coat around her. It was still dry on the inner side; he had seen to that. He held his arm about her shaking form and leaned his head upon her rain-soaked hair, as a mother holds and folds the child who has done wrong and asks to be forgiven. Yet all the time he blamed himself. Could he not watch a child for half-an-hour?

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It seemed to David afterwards that the whole summer lay within that night's embrace. Now he was back at college and hard at work, for he must win his place upon the Honors list, else how face Lily, who had high ideals for those she loved, though she herself would never give the time within four walls to study anything profound?

Only Gabriel knew that he had grown from boy to man upon a summer's night.

"Dear," she said, and smiled down on his upturned

face, as he sat upon the low settle by her side and paused before he threw a log upon the fire, for it was Christmas now, "Lily is such a childish child and will not be a woman for some years, while you are still at college."

"But what has that to do with it?" he said. "I shall never change, you know."

That was true and Gabriel knew it well. She almost wished she did not know it, she almost wished it was not true; but already David's chin was firmly set, already his eyes were deep with thought, already, though so young, he was a man.

CHAPTER XV

A MAN IN EARNEST AND A CHILD AT PLAY

THE summer and winter had come and gone, and in a few hours Lily would be just seventeen.

David rose from the garden-seat and walked across the dew-laden fields. From a hedge which he passed he plucked for her the first wild rose he had seen.

"Lily," he said, "good-morning, dear. See, this rose is still in bud and so will last the longer, and here is sweet-briar from the garden; we planted it together, you know."

He looked with the longing of years into her eyes, for it seemed to him that he had waited all his life till she should be a woman and understand his love. But Lily was still a child.

"Come to breakfast, Boy," she said, "and eat the honey my bees have made. Uncle Richard declared we must wait for you when he saw you cross the stream."

They spent that whole long summer day together, but still David had not told her anything. Now she romped with his mastiff pup and they played together as two children play who know nothing but the game in hand, while the sober David waited and watched.

He wondered if he had something more of patience still to learn. Lily grew so bright and beautiful, and everyday he loved her more. But how speak of marriage to a child whose heart is filled with play?

"David!" Gabriel linked her arm in his and led him through an open door, till they stood in the high-walled garden. Here they had planted many things that needed care to grow.

"See!" and David paused beside a bed of edelweiss; "it has taken kindly to the soil at last. The buds are larger and more in number every year."

Gabriel plucked a tiny blossom and placed it in his coat, and thought of John. Then she looked at David, as he stood beside her deep in thought.

"There is something wrong," he said, "with the days or months or years. Ten years should span the same, no matter where they come in the history of man or child, but we see that time is often almost nothing, while sometimes we live our whole lives in a day."

"Yes, that is so," and Gabriel, as she spoke, thought again of John and of those hours that she had spent beside him, while he passed through the valley of the shadow. David's thought was also of John, and then it went back to a stormy summer's night and lingered on a Highland moor, bringing to his mind a boy's long search for a little child.

For a moment he did not speak.

"Gabriel," he said, a little wistfully, and looked into her eyes; "am I at all like John?"

Gabriel saw as he stood there framed in the light of the setting sun that he was very like John indeed, yet also he claimed his mother's beauty and added its charm to his father's nobleness.

"Dear," she replied, "you are very like John, and like Phyllis too."

"You and I," he said at last reluctantly, "must leave at six to-morrow or we shall not catch the Calais boat.

I wish so much we need not go." He listened for Lily's voice as she played with his mastiff pup.

"Come with me." Gabriel spoke with suddenness and David Kelman followed her and closed the door.

"David, I have watched Lily almost daily all this year. She is still a child at heart and may grow into a woman whom we do not know."

"What difference would that make?" he said. "To me she would always be the same. I," he added simply, "have already loved her for years."

"For years!" Gabriel spoke rebelliously, for she was sore afraid for David's happiness. "It is not so many years since you lost her on Loch Leyland moor."

Though with his eyes he smiled, David's mouth was stern.

"Love," he answered, "may lie dormant for a time and does not always know itself. That night upon the moor I knew that I had loved her then for years."

Gabriel was glad that David was so tall and stood so far above her chair, glad also of the near twilight, for now her eyes were soft with unshed tears and she was sore afraid for David's happiness, yet could not tell the name or nature of her fear.

David's eyes and lips were smiling now.

"Why," he asked, "do we count time at all? You, Gabriel, are many years my senior and Lily still a child, but does that alter by a single heart-beat my love for you or her?"

Then Gabriel's tears fell fast and she was glad that the dusk was there, yet knew not why she wept.

But though he could not see her face, David knew her grief and understood its source.

"Alma Mater," he whispered softly and knelt beside her chair, "did you think that I could ever love you less, because always I love Lily too? Gabriel," he said and put his strong arms round her, "you are the greatest friend I have in all the world. My love for Lily is a different thing. Always I must take care of her, while I have been, and am your care and you have made me what I am."

How well he understood the human mother-love which finds it hard to see the nestling spread its wings and fly!

"Dear," she said, "I know. Now this is how it seems to me. We go away to-morrow for a month or more. You had better speak to Lily now."

"What, is patient Gabriel become the impatient one? I hardly know my Alma Mater to-night."

"I do not know myself," she said, "but I seem full of fear. It is time the child went home, and still she romps with Rob."

Now David stood upon the terrace bank watching Lily while she played. "I know," he whispered, "when it was I loved you first . . . years and years ago, the day you made me late for tea."

"Lily!" he said aloud and strode across the lawn, then stood beside her while he sought to stay her hand, for she held the puppy's giant paws and tried to stand its too great weight upon its hinder toes.

"Boy," she said protestingly, "Rob is having his lessons just now and you are dreadfully in the way."

"Lily!" He pleaded this time but either she did not hear or she would not heed the yearning in his voice.

"It is well," she cried, and shook her hair back from

her face, while she laughed in his grave eyes, "that you and your good Gabriel live up here at Inkervale, while I stay with my Uncle Richard in the valley below, for often . . . you spoil my play."

"It is nearly dark." David's tone was stern and his face a little pale, for he had a story of years to tell. "It is time that you went home. I will walk with you across the fields."

But Lily would not have it so. She jumped upon the rustic stile, then leapt upon the higher bank.

"Oh, David the staid!" she cried. "That is just where it always is, you would walk with me across the fields, but I, you see, propose to run."

She swept a kiss from both her hands and sped across the new-mown hay. But David's stride was fast and sure, and in a moment he spoke again.

"Lily," he said, "I have something to say, and to-morrow we leave this place for a month."

"Oh, David," she pouted, "you are so grave. A month is no time at all. Come, Boy," she cried and held out her hand. "Come, run with me right down this slope, unless indeed you are grown too grave."

So David took her hand and ran with her right down the slope, then begged once more that she would hear what he would say, nor did he loosen his hold of her hand.

"Lily," he said, "I have something to say to you to-night if you will but listen to me. A month is not a very long time, yet . . . it is a month too long for me."

"Boy!" she cried, and was off like a flash. "A month, as you say, is not a long time. So just now, why, just now . . . it's good-by to you, dear

David the grave . . . good-by, and . . . good-by."

How speak of marriage to a child, whose heart is filled with play. So patient David stood a while just there at the end of the grassy slope and fought a big battle with self. Dazed for the moment and wounded sore, he wondered if Lily could ever love as he accounted loving, then chided himself for blaming her because she held her girlhood so dear that she would not part with it even to him.

"Gabriel," he said, as he bade her good-night, "why should we feel afraid? It is true what she said as she ran away, a month is no time at all."

A month is no time at all, yet in it a life may be made or marred.

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A month is no time at all, and soon they were back at Inkervale and Lily was coming to tea.

The business in Russia had needed deep thought, and neither Gabriel nor David were people who wrote many letters, while Lily was always too busy, she said, to write a letter at all.

They stopped at the Rectory as they drove up, but found the household away.

"They have gone to lunch at The Craggs again."

Old Nana spoke with meaning in her tone.

Gabriel wondered why she seemed so grave, but David took no note of anything.

"To The Craggs?" he exclaimed. "I thought the family were abroad."

Then Nana looked at him and Gabriel heard a second warning in her voice.

"It is you and Miss Grand who have been abroad,

Mr. Kelman, and so you have missed the news. The Craggs was sold the day after you left, and the new master has been there just a month."

But David was eager to get away, for he wished to come quickly back again.

"I will take you home," he said to Gabriel, "and then fetch Lily in the car. She will be just in time for tea."

But before he could return Lily had heard that they were back and left the carriage as they drove away from The Craggs.

"I will take the footpath to the Hall," she said to Richard Gray; "I must see them both immediately, and if I stay to dinner, David will see me home."

Neither Richard nor Priscilla said a word, for they saw that they must let things take their course, but their hearts were overful as they watched her passing through a ripe cornfield, plucking the wheat as she went. She turned and smiled upon them both, and her face was aglow with the sun. She seemed part of a wonderful harvest-song as she paused on the brow of the hill and waved them a bright good-by.

A moment later she ran along the higher bank above the rustic stile and called to David first and Gabriel next, for he had turned the car and started down the drive.

She stood there in her summer gown and her face was framed in a huge sun hat all wreathed with poppies and ripe corn.

"David . . . Gabriel! I am here." David saw her now and sprang from the car, then strode across the lawn, yet could not wait a moment but must speak to her from afar.

"Lily," he cried, "a month is no time at all, and we have come back at last." Then he laughed for sheer joy to have her so near, so soon to be close to his heart.

"David," she cried, "I have news for you. I wanted to tell you myself."

She looked for a minute over his head to where Gabriel stood a little way off under the chestnut-tree.

"What news have you got, dear heart?" he said, and half mounting the bank he prisoned her hands, then lifted her gently down, but found he had much ado to let her go at all. For her eyes were smiling into his and her lips were laughing for joy. "Lily," he said, and looked into her eyes, while his heart beat fast with his eager wooing, "a month is no time at all, you say, yet this has been a long month for me. Will you listen now, dear, to a tale, always new, though twice told?"

"No, no!" she cried. "You must listen to me. I have waited to tell you myself."

"Then tell me your news, dear heart. Be quick and share it with me."

"It is only this," and suddenly Lily grew grave, and Gabriel's heart was filled with fear: "I am to be married quite soon. His name is Andrew Young."

"Yes?"

David spoke as the dying speak, then turned and strode away.

"David, David! You shall not treat me so. I have waited to tell you myself."

But David shook her from his arm; then leaping upon the bank he dropped upon the other side and walked swiftly towards the open fields.

"Child!" Gabriel cried. "You do not understand. Tell *me* about your Andrew Young."

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David Kelman knocked at Gabriel's door that night when all the household slept, and she was glad that he had come. But what manner of man was this, who held out trembling hands to her? Whose voice was this that asked her for her aid? What aid had she to give to one in such distress?

"You are right," she said at last. "We will go away at once and you shall have your wish."

So she and David went to London, while Lily became formally engaged to Andrew Young.

"I will not go back to Inkervale," David said to Gabriel, "until I can hold her husband's hand in mine and call him a friend. I will not go back to Inkervale, until I can hold her hand in mine and call her also friend."

Thus David had his wish of years ago and studied for a high medical degree. He would no longer waste the talent which he knew that he possessed.

"Death," he said to Gabriel, "is cruel, pain more cruel still, while sin and sorrow are worst of all, for they are back of almost every hell there is. What right have I to grieve or add to the sorrow of a world? An aching heart has no place where there are already so many hearts to heal and pain-racked bodies seeking peace, for it would make of a man always much less than a man."

So David braced himself and lifted his head, and planted his feet high on the ladder of life, while Gabriel watched him as he worked and wondered, as she had

wondered often before, what manner of man would he one day become, this son of Phyllis and of John, who lived a life in a night or a day?

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And what of Lily and Andrew Young?

"I am to be married quite soon," she had said, yet after all Miss Gray had her way.

That night, when David had knocked at Gabriel's door, Priscilla stayed for hours by Lily's side. Her fingers were stupid, it seemed, and the brush, how often it caught in Lily's long hair! Then, why were her answers so slow and harsh, while Lily's chatter was busy and bright? Now she lingered by the white bed and pressed her lips on Lily's cheek and fresh, untroubled brow.

"Lily," she pleaded, yet chided herself for her foolish fear and sought to forget a sorrow-filled past, "your mother was younger than you, dear heart, when her husband took her from my care. Wait, my darling, wait any rate until you are twenty-one. She married four years too soon."

So Lily promised to wait. "Why not?" she said. Life was rosy enough as it was, and gladsome and gay all the time.

Priscilla kissed her darling again and shaded the light, for why should Lily see tears in her eyes? Why should the tears be there at all?

Later, she stood at her brother's study door and voiced the grief in her heart.

"She might have married to-morrow," she said, "if David had been the man. We have trusted him for years; we could trust him always to care for the child."

Richard Gray, man-like, made a man's reply, though

in his heart he too was afraid, yet he knew not what, or why, he feared.

“Her choice,” he said, “is for Andrew Young. She is apt to know her mind.”

CHAPTER XVI

TWO CHILDREN AT PLAY

AGAIN, what of Lily and Andrew Young? Sometimes, as he watched their lives pass year by year, Richard Gray would ask himself, if both were not meant for something better than this long gala-day. Yet, at other times it seemed impossible to dissociate Lily from a life of perpetual sunshine. It was her native element and Andrew would be able to give her many things that he and Priscilla with their moderate income could not afford. Andrew promised her hunters second to none, and planned to take her, winter after winter, just where she would in search of the pastime which both loved best of all. With his lithe form and beautiful seat, Mr. Young more than held his own in any field, while Lily rode as one to whom the sport was second nature, as one who loved the horse that carried her. They were as one in all they did together.

No other couple could dance as these two danced, no other pair could vie with them when, during a wonderful six weeks' frost, they spent long hours upon the ice. No one in the country had parties to compare with Andrew Young's. The Craggs was the most beautiful of the many lovely seats in that wild part of England, and house and grounds were often bright with a merry crowd that came and went, an ever-changing kaleidoscope.

To Andrew life was a wonderful fairy tale. He had bought The Craggs one day and had seen Lily passing through his grounds the next. She supposed the family who had owned it to be still in possession, and used the short cut by the river bank whenever she went to the Hall. In less than a month he had spoken and Lily had answered at once. Neither ever had a moment's doubt. Richard Gray was right; Lily was apt to know her own mind certainly, and Andrew — why, Andrew knew nothing before of joy approaching to this. In all his life no one had ever loved him, yet how he had longed to be loved! So it was that now, even after three years, it seemed wonderful to him that Lily should have so readily promised to marry him.

Sometimes, just for love of hearing her say it again, he would ask why she cared for him, and she, if in the mood to tease, would tell him that it was because he had a nice straight nose, or because he had so many thousands of pounds to spend upon her clothes or to buy her jewels with! But Andrew knew that this was nonsense only. Lily never paused to notice whether her friends were pretty or plain, and as to the money, she knew nothing at all about that. Two thousand a year was the same to her mind as twenty or thirty might be. What matter, so long as people were free and could roam the world as they would?

Sometimes, but only rarely, when in a graver mood, she would tell Andrew that she had consented to marry him because she loved him better than anyone else in all the world, and because she knew quite certainly that they would be happy all their lives together. Then Andrew's eyes would grow soft as they looked into hers and he would thank God again for this great possession.

There were but one or two clouds upon their sky. Lily, though she went each week to church, was less religious than it seemed to him a woman should be. He himself was strictly orthodox, his training had tended that way. The Egauts had taken him every Sunday to church and had seen him duly confirmed. They belonged to that class of people who consider it wise to be as other men are, and it would have seemed to Andrew a dreadful thing for young people like Lily and himself to strike out a line for themselves in the matter of religion.

The other little cloud was Lily's inability to value money properly. He himself was willing enough to spend it in certain ways. He was the richest man in that part of the country and delighted to think of Lily beautifully dressed and surrounded with every care. It would of course be necessary in his position that she should be so. Lily also loved the thought of the gowns she would wear, when she became Andrew's wife, but she would choose them with but one idea — what sort of picture would they make? She dressed herself as an artist drapes a model and sends his creation forth into the world. The fashion was almost nothing to her and the latest color a matter of no moment, unless it had beauty to support it. She simply had a picture to paint, whether for the Bishop's garden-party or for the coming county ball. The opinions of men were nothing to her so long as her picture was true to true art.

It was the same with all that she did. She longed to travel first-class, for she hated to crush her dainty clothes and preferred the view from a corner seat and the calm of an empty carriage to the crowd of a dusty "third." She decided that she would pay her servants higher

wages than anyone else and would demand as perfect a service as the twentieth century had to give. She dearly loved to lavish on others the joys which wealth has to bestow, and would no more count the cost of a gift to a friend than the price of the jewels she herself would wear.

But Andrew Young was the natural outcome of the life that he had always led. Money was to him the most important thing in the world. We know that it had always ruled his guardian's thought, and we know that he had thus been reared in an atmosphere of greed. What more natural than that he should now find himself aware of every penny that he spent. Inevitably he suffered when Lily laughed at him and called his investments stupid things.

"What," she asked, "is the good of money at all, unless it is there to spend every day? It is merely a medium of exchange. In itself it is made of dust."

Andrew had once tried patiently enough to show her the value and importance of those same investments, and she had listened as best she could, but her brain, she declared, was not made that way and all that was left in her mind that day when the gong had summoned them to lunch was a jumbled jingle of stocks and shares and a series of three, or was it of thirty, per cents.?

But though Andrew Young suffered because she would not or rather could not bow before his god of gold, and though he was sometimes seriously disquieted because she spoke to him of religious matters with a smile upon her lips, forgetting to lower her voice as the Egauts had always done when pointing out to him for instance the just retribution which might be expected by those who offended against their orthodox creed, yet

Lily was the one thing in the world that he loved better than himself, and he indulged her every whim.

What would life be without Lily by his side? Even what it had been, a mere existence unworthy of the name of life. What would life be without Lily's love? Andrew would sometimes torture himself, as the over-sensitive will, with questions such as these, and it was because Lily was all-in-all to him that he refused her nothing, and each year became much more her slave. How thankful he was that he was so rich and could give her, when she should become his wife, more than all she needed! He could not imagine her poor. Even her simplest cotton gowns cost her uncle a great deal of money, for Lily in ill-fitting garments made at home was an incongruity impossible to contemplate. Lily at the head of a table less well appointed than his would seem to him a jewel badly set.

Yes, he was glad to be the wealthiest man for miles around, glad that his capital was so safely and so well invested, for under no circumstances, if he left things as they were, would he and Lily be anything but rich; and he was too careful a business man to disturb investments or to touch securities which were both safe and good.

Lily loved the wild beauty of The Craggs and the space and comfort of a house that had stood upon these western slopes for several hundred years. How wonderful, he thought, that he should have one day bought a home so pleasing to her and met her the very next!

So the months flew by and with his whole heart and soul Andrew Young loved Lily and lived each hour of his life for her and her alone.

How much did Lily love him? Even as he loved her, though she would never quite lay bare her soul to him in this respect. Her nature was so happy, her eyes so often full of fun, that Andrew sometimes begged for confirmation of her love in common words, and this to her seemed stupid. She had decided that she loved him three weeks after she first met him. She was not apt to change her mind; this surely Andrew knew. She never for a moment doubted his love for her. She took it for granted, as she took all the sunshine of her life. To contemplate life day after day, year after year, with a man whom she did not love would have been so impossible to her that for Andrew to question her whole-hearted affection seemed to her a simple absurdity.

They were always together and always as happy as the day was long. Every taste they had they possessed in common. Life was one long gala-day and they spent it side by side. Always she was Andrew's tender care, always his great reward, while she was as content to look to him for her every need as is a butterfly to flit through the sun-laden air or rest upon the petals of a flower. In return she loved him as simply and as wholly as she had always loved the few to whom she had extended her trust; that was the foundation-stone of her love for man, as for woman, and once Lily had decided to trust she was slow to withdraw her esteem, slow to believe that a friend could be less than worthy. This being the case, it must inevitably come about that should one whom she had dearly loved betray the unbounded confidence that she had placed in him before bestowing her love, that love must change its very nature or must die outright.

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So each month passed almost as a day and Lily was soon to be married to Andrew Young; in a year she would be twenty-one. Then suddenly he left her for a week and came back altered almost beyond her recognition.

To understand the year which followed we must spend that week beside him, when perhaps we shall learn something of that mercy which teaches man that, while he must ever hate the wrong, he may not judge his brother, for who shall say with how much of seeming power the dark temptation comes to each and how unguarded may be that hour? Nay, while we ever loathe the sin, we learn that gentle mercy and true justice work always hand in hand and teach each one to look at home ere he busies himself with his brother's wrong.

CHAPTER XVII

MENTAL CONTAGION, YET ONLY THE DREAM

ANDREW YOUNG had not seen the man who had been his guardian since the day, now five years ago, on which he had abruptly parted from him in the old streets of Leighminster after their final interview with the firm of Snares & Snarles.

He was naturally enough both perplexed and perturbed at receiving one morning a letter from Mr. Gordon urging him to come at once to a remote town in France, there to meet him and a lawyer whose name the writer did not mention. The letter was so worded and the gravity of the danger with which it threatened Lily and himself was so clearly indicated, that Andrew felt that he had no choice but to start by the first boat possible for the Continent. What seriously disquieted him was the fact that he felt obliged to obey the emphatic warning that Mr. Gordon underlined — a warning which advised him on no account to speak of his destination or to mention the object of his journey to anyone.

Lily would trust him, of course. Andrew knew that. It would not occur to her to do otherwise; he had never met a nature so little curious and so free from the habit of suspicion, but in all the three years of their engagement he had never concealed anything from her nor she from him. Yet there was apparently no help

for it now and he held Lily's two hands a long time before he bent and kissed her good-by.

"I shall be back to-day week," he said, and waved to her as the dogcart drove out of sight.

Two days later he alighted from the train at the dreariest spot he had ever seen. Merville station did not boast a platform and Mr. Young walked across a sandy patch of ground and accosted the *chef de gare*, who stared at him curiously when he asked his way to La Rustique, the residence of Mr. George Gordon, but immediately directed him. M. Gordon was apparently well known.

Ten minutes' walk brought Mr. Young to the villa he sought. The small garden was full of bright flowers but it was quite unkempt. The little path that ran up to the front door was dirty and the white stone step showed every sign of neglect. That no brisk *femme de ménage* had scoured its surface that day was evident. The house, once white, was squalid in appearance, and the green of the shutters was now a nondescript gray mottled with patches of yellow. Altogether the cottage was a dismal contrast to the neat dwellings on either side.

After a considerable time his knock was answered, but in an unexpected manner. A voice barely recognizable as that of George Gordon hailed him, and looking suddenly to his right Andrew Young saw before him the face of the man he had not seen for five years. But no — this could not be his late guardian. This surely was some horrible travesty of a human countenance — some wanton joke, some ghastly farce, anything but the face of a man. Surely, surely, no disease existed that could do this! Involuntarily Andrew

Young at once turned away his head and asked, though with an effort, for Mr. George Gordon. Quick as his movement had been, it had not been quick enough and he had seen the face — if face it were — distort itself into a hideous grimace, which with a sickening sense of fear he realized partook of the nature of a smile.

"Here, Trott, fetch him in." So spoke the voice which Mr. Young now felt bound to accept as belonging to Gordon.

"One moment." A man opened the door of the little dwelling and beckoned to him to enter. The man was an obvious half-caste and a stranger to Andrew Young. He resented his presence, though he could not tell why.

When an hour later Mr. Young left the house, he walked as a man walks when fast asleep. Yet he was wide enough awake to suffer all the time.

No one else appeared along the quiet country roads. For miles he walked and finally sank by the wayside because exhausted and conscious that he needed rest.

"I will not believe it," he muttered. "I will never believe it."

So said Andrew Young and hid his face upon his trembling knees, for he shook in every limb.

"Lily!" he gasped and shivered again. "Lily!" The thought of Lily he could not bear. The knowledge that Lily must know was worse than all the other horror of the hour that he had spent in the company of George Gordon and his companion, Joseph Trott.

"You had best consider." The voice of Joseph Trott was suave, and so unexpected was his presence that it pulled up Mr. Young with a sharp reminder of his desperate situation. "I told Gordon not to see

you himself," Trott continued. "He has been drinking quietly for years, the fool! He has been here for months, too poor, he says, to move away!" The man laughed and then continued: "He has been frightened of the stuff all his life, I believe — never dared to take his split with another chap. Father or grandfather or brother or someone died of it after being shut up first. That's what he's most afraid of." The man laughed again. "However," he added, "now that this disease has caught him on the face, he is seldom sober and doesn't think much about anything else. He doesn't like his beauty being spoilt — vain, I suppose." And the half-caste looked furtively at Andrew Young, while he added, "he's afraid it is hereditary, like the drink. What he told you is gospel truth, though, and good enough for the law to act upon, too! Best accept our terms at once. Thirty thou' isn't much under the circumstances!"

"Not much?" Mr. Young was very rich, but brought up, as he had been, in an atmosphere of material reckonings, he wondered if the man knew what he was saying.

"Everything is comparative," the other answered. "It is not much compared to the only alternative which faces you. Mrs. Young that is to be ——" He watched the man before him narrowly again and saw that he had best not play too long upon this chord, and then continued hurriedly: "She's fond of that remarkable avenue of rhododendrons, for instance. There aren't many places as pretty as The Craggs, I hear."

But he had played too long upon this chord. Andrew Young sprang upon him and shook him till he cried for mercy.

But, after all, of what use was this futile fury? Andrew was entirely in the hands of these two men and knew it. Only one way of escape lay open and Lily barred that way, or so it seemed to him.

Five days later he returned to The Craggs. Lily was at the station to meet him. They had tea at the Rectory with Richard and Priscilla Gray and were now walking through the wonderful avenue of rhododendrons to which Joseph Trott had referred. Lily knew every tree at The Craggs and every flowering shrub. She had loved them all for years and had spent many hours of her childhood wandering through the grounds, while the then absentee landlord was abroad. To-day a great blaze of deep crimson, pale rose and snow-white blossoms greeted them on either side. The rhododendron bushes were higher than the tallest man, and the avenue was planted along ground that first undulated and then rose into a hill-side.

Lily was alone with Andrew, and suddenly, after a long silence, she spoke very softly:

"Andrew!"

Andrew Young trembled. What was this new tone in Lily's voice? She was speaking again now and had slipped her arm through his.

"Dear," she said, "I have found out something while you were away. I—" and Lily stopped a moment and looked straight into his eyes—"I have found out that you are much more to me than even I knew, though I have known always that I love you a great deal. It made me seem tiresome sometimes, I am afraid. It was so plain to me, so simple a fact, so certain to me. I could never marry any man whom I did not love,

and it angered me a little when you asked me whether I loved you as you counted loving."

It was Andrew's turn now to be mute. He just stood there stupidly and let the moisture fill his eyes and let Lily kiss his lids, while he tried to shut out from her sight the unshed tears. But Lily did not mind his silence. Hers was a trustful soul. She had said three years ago that she would marry Andrew Young because she loved him, and because she was very sure that he loved her. Her nature was simple and straightforward, and that was why she had told Andrew immediately of the greater knowledge of her love that she had gained during his absence. She was very happy with him during those first few days, but more or less suddenly she realized that he was not happy. Naturally she at once asked him what his trouble was, and she was astonished when he said that he could not tell her. Even then she did not distrust him, but she had never been so perplexed in her life. She always told him all her difficulties; it would have seemed unnatural to her not to do so.

As the months passed on she grew seriously uneasy. Andrew became rapidly a changed man. For hours he would sit in moody silence, not reading the book in his hand. They went everywhere together, in company, with Mr. Gray or his sister, and Andrew clung to Lily to an extent which was new — or was it that a new feature had entered into his love? Lily was not analytical, but she felt that he now sought not only to protect and care for her more than ever before, but that he, in some indefinable way, came to her to be taken care of. Yes, that was it! He seemed always afraid. He would start

and utter an excited exclamation when the door opened at all unexpectedly, and when he lunched or dined at the Rectory she observed that his whole attitude was one of nervous watchfulness. He looked ill and for the first time was angry with her when one day she remarked upon it. Then an hour later she pointed to a tiny spot behind his ear and asked him what it was. His face whitened and he left her without a word.

Immediately after breakfast the next morning he came to the Rectory and told her he was on his way to London.

Some hours later he stood in the consulting-room of a well-known skin specialist in London.

The interview was a long one and the doctor was very careful to hold out as much hope as he could, for he had at once diagnosed his patient's extremely nervous condition.

"You must not allow yourself to get at all run down," he said kindly, as he shook Mr. Young's hand. "We have learnt the value of keeping the whole system well nourished and our patients in as normal a condition of happiness as possible. There is every reason to hope. You have come to me so quickly and we have more than one method of treating skin diseases in these enlightened days. So don't give way to depression. It's not fair to yourself, or," he added with a smile, "to your physician. It doesn't give us the same chance; and," the doctor's tone was graver now, "be careful to avoid stimulants; they will do no good in your case."

Mr. Young left the house, but the door was not yet closed.

"One minute," he said and then told the maid that he wished to see Dr. Ryland again.

"I came back," he spoke rapidly, as a man speaks when he wishes to be quickly done with what he must say, "to tell you that I believe this thing is hereditary."

The physician had long ago trained his face to tell no tales, but he was now in the presence of a greater degree of fear than he was aware of and the almost imperceptible pause which he made before he endeavored to reassure Mr. Young was enough for his patient.

"Thanks," he said curtly in answer to the doctor's words of kindly encouragement. "Good-by."

Mr. Young hailed the first taxi he could see and drove, not to his train, though he was in good time for the express by which he had told Lily he would return that day, but to his club, and it was late in the afternoon before he left it.

From that day Lily found that her whole life had become a different thing. Often it seemed to her that Andrew was scarcely aware of what he said or did. The spot behind his ear spread gradually and was now visible on his face. He went abroad and tried a treatment suggested by Dr. Ryland, but without result. He was told that more drastic measures must be resorted to, if in a few months no improvement occurred. Should those fail . . . but Lily would not allow herself to contemplate any such possibility. The matter had at last become serious in her eyes, chiefly because it seemed to possess Andrew's thought from morning to night. Often she would find him deliberately studying his face in the glass and she observed that he never passed an ornamental mirror without glancing into it, while the look of terror in his eyes was now becoming a settled thing. Still she did not understand the complete alteration of his character, which every day grew more

marked. For the first time in her life she spoke to no one of her trouble. To Andrew she could not speak. Of late, when she approached the subject, he had looked at her with something besides fear in his eyes — anger it seemed to be, but his disposition was naturally gentle and he had never been wont to be angry with her, so she put that thought aside.

Thus the months passed into a year, and late in May their wedding day was settled. For a time it seemed to Lily that all was well again. Andrew was his old loving self, if possible more considerate. Lily, always trustful, always apt to be bright and joyous, said to herself that she would ask no questions of the past. What did the past matter? The present was filled to overflowing with a wonderful gladness and it was her nature to be grateful for the thing in hand, quite unnatural to her to meet a sorrow half way. Now that he was himself again, Andrew was even more to her than before, and in some way, which she herself did not comprehend, his curious dependence upon her during the past year had given birth to a new quality in her love. The mother-instinct seemed to be awake within her and to embrace him, for she yearned over him and longed to bring him back into the sunshine; and so she would. She could easily do so now, for he had been almost as bright as ever during the hours they had just spent out on the lawn beneath the great hedge of May.

So Lily wove a thread of gold into the future, as she was apt to do, and Andrew watched her with an increasing love and hated himself with a more dangerous hatred every day.

Thus he hedged himself about with woe and thus he

rocked himself into a deeper sleep, for how may a man help that self to rise which all the time he hates? How free from sin the one whom in secret silence he holds despicable?

Thus Andrew Young, victim of a world's confusion, became first hopeless and then helpless, and, knowing nothing of man as he really is, mistook the untrue for the true, and yet there waits for each and all the understanding not only of that love which "hopeth all things," but of that light, born of Love, which alone can reveal man as the work of God.

CHAPTER XVIII

A MAN AT WORK

WHILE the years had passed and brought to Lily and Andrew Young a life filled for the most part with joyous play, David Kelman had worked as only the minority ever work, and already he had reaped some reward, and in a certain sense his was a rare reward. There was no other man of his profession more loved by rich and poor, by low and high, then was Dr. Kelman when he ministered to the sick.

"What is it that makes men love him so?" the nurses asked, as he passed them in the ward. "What is it that makes his presence felt?" The students gathered round the fire and wished to be one day like him. "What is it?" his seniors muttered, though each whispered the question only to his heart, for they did not yet admit his power to men.

"I'll tell you," a sick woman said, as she sat by the open window and courted the evening sun. "It is the hope in his merry eyes and the strength in his wonderful voice."

"It is," the poor man laughed and cut a fresh wad to fill him a second pipe, "his great square shoulders and his upright form and the 'boss' in his every tone. He heartens a body up, I say. You can't think sick, much less be sick, with a chap like that beside you."

"Mummy, I know," and the little child nestled its

cool, sweet brow softly against its mother's breast, as it rested at peace once more. "Mummy, I know what sent the pain right away. It was the love all over the doctor's face that time when he laughed at me."

Gabriel watched her David's career, as he burned the midnight oil and gleaned the best of all that appeared.

"It is," she said, as she closed his door and left him alone with his books, "his faith in the right and his inward conviction of ultimate good."

Dr. Kelman valued the love he won and held it as one holds their all. For what else had life in store for him? A great career and many friends were all that the years could now bestow. Was it certain, do you think, that he would become a little spoiled? Before you judge him harshly or call him fool, let each look back upon the past and ask his heart if adulation ever failed to create therein a grateful glow, even though convention taught him all the time to mask the face with that which makes the devil grin—"his darling sin" . . . "the pride that apes humility." It is only here and there that a man or woman wears in fact an honor as it should be worn, for it is only here and there that a man or woman knows that in very truth all power belongs to God and that of himself a man is naught. Such knowledge lifts the honor that the world bestows high above the hand of man and reveals it as a trust from heaven. Such knowledge fills the heart with a true humility and holds the head that wears the laurel leaf above the pleasures and the pains of sense, holds it where adulation is seen for what it really is—a delusion fraught with death, a foul intoxicant made chiefly of the insincere; and being recognized as such, it can do no harm at

all but serves to lift a man above himself to higher things.

David Kelman was not old enough to realize all that the experience of years may help to teach, but which years alone, unaided by true knowledge, can never teach. So he took the admiration that he won and used it as he might. A man must have an object in his life and David Kelman made ambition his, yet in so far as in him lay he kept his motive pure. He wished to lessen sin, and he greatly desired to abate the sickness and to assuage the sorrow of the helpless race called man.

Often he and Gabriel would wonder at it all. Why were men born? To what purpose did they live, and after death, what then? Why had they lived at all? Yet both David and Miss Grand were steadfast in their purpose so to live that they might uplift their fellow-man and ease the suffering of their world. "The Idealists," these two were often called, sometimes by mocking lips, and this not seldom, for man as a rule is not ready to admire that which he neither understands nor desires to understand. But in the course of those years that Gabriel and David spent in London they gathered round their table a thoughtful minority who were awakening to the fact that life must have a more serious claim upon the thought of man than that of fashion or of personal preferment alone.

To such as these the simple, though rather stately, meal and long after-dinner talk that they enjoyed in Miss Grand's house was a time of great refreshment. But many left their circle and flew onward, preferring the hustle of a self-seeking world to the somewhat grave companionship which Miss Grand's friends provided. Yet they were never dull, these men and women who

foregathered as her guests. They were men of letters and of art and were often possessors of a knowledge of their subject that was profound.

"I do not want to live in Mayfair," Gabriel had said, "and there is money enough for you to have a house in the West End, meeting your professional needs, while you will find both rest and change here in this quiet home."

Truly Dr. Kelman found both in the old city square and loved the evening hour spent by Gabriel's side.

They had selected a quaint, roomy house, standing among surroundings of ancient date, dwellings built long ago with sometimes an oak gallery almost bisecting the second floor and looking down upon a great square hall. Here a tired man could seek his well-earned rest after the day's work, scarcely hearing the distant rumble of a busy world. In Miss Grand's house both gallery and library were always bright with flowers from Inker-vale, and pots of fresh fern faced the visitor who, wearied with the heat and bustle of London in June, entered the hall and reveled in the sudden coolness of dark oak wainscot and moss-green curtains.

Long afterwards men and women looked back upon these few years that Miss Grand spent in London, and many dated the birth of a greater good to some word spoken in that old city house.

"What after all is this ambition?" a thoughtful youth upon the threshold of his life remarked one day to Gabriel Grand. "If I do well I shall, when I am forty, command my regiment for just four years, and, even then, what shall I have achieved? Afterwards . . . what then? Only the very few can hope to rise more quickly, or to a higher hope than that, and

even if they do . . . what then? Take the lawyer, statesman, doctor, who or what you will, when all is said and done, what has he reaped for all his years of toil? Nothing, as a rule, until his prime is past, and what a price he has paid for fame! All the best years of a man's life have gone in pursuit of a crown which he cannot hope to wear for long — a crown which has been wrested by fair means perhaps, but quite often by foul measures, from the struggling clutch of other's hands. And what is fame after all? Is it worth the breath that it is spoken with? Is it worth the price of a man's soul so often paid for it?"

"Is it worth," Gabriel asked, "the best years of a woman's life, so often needed to back up the efforts of the man — weary days of favor always courted, sometimes won; weary nights on fashion's treadmill, while a mother's heart is pining for time and freedom so to guide and guard her young that they may be less wearied by the fight to live and rise? Yet," she added thoughtfully, "we may not take away ambition from those who have no higher hope, for, though its motive power is almost always egotistical and seldom altruistic, yet here and there it rises from a nobler base and incidentally the man who is ambitious lifts, I suppose, the standard of the world, since others race with him, and to be in the running must manifest both energy and brain."

"You look at the predicate and find a flaw, I look at the ultimate and find that the game was never worth the candle," the man upon the threshold of his life replied. "Surely there must be something better for a fallen race than selfish motive and a goal seldom won until age has robbed a man of that degree of vigor

needed for the full enjoyment of the laurels which usually crown a brow already weary! True, success comes sometimes, more often than we realize perhaps, to the man who still can call full manhood his, but after all what is it worth? The admiration of a world, what is it chiefly made of, and how long would it stand the test of time? Easily given, it is as easily taken away; born in a day, it often dies in an hour."

"I am sure," Miss Grand replied, "indeed, I always have been sure, that somewhere, as you say, there must be something better for our race. This certainty that I have always had amounts at times to strong conviction, yet I cannot find the thing I seek. Dr. Kelman and I have sought for it for years, yet we get no nearer to the mark!"

"Kelman's case is an unusual one," Dr. Broadhurst, a much older man, replied. "He is already making his name and is still quite young. Of course his money and your large circle, to say nothing of his clever fingers, helped him at the first, but he has something of his own to which I cannot put a name. Is he ambitious as the world would use the word?"

"Ask him," Miss Grand answered with a smile. It was well known that she rarely talked of David to her friends. She was not sure herself how much he hoped for fame, how much he hungered to free a world from suffering. Sometimes she feared that his unprecedented climb might deepen a certain coldness that his nature seemed to hold; sometimes she feared that his thought was becoming purely intellectual and so critical that she alone could fan into flame the softening sparks of love. Yet how kind he was to those in need, and how gentle to those in pain! His moral code was insistent there.

The law which bids a man do unto others as he would have them do unto himself was an unwritten canon in David Kelman's life.

If only he had loved Lily less, Gabriel sometimes thought, he might have loved others more.

She need not have feared. Though David himself often wondered if his heart were dead, at times he knew very well that it lived and loved; for though the years had passed and he had not once seen Lily's face yet he had not dared to go to Inkervale.

"I have never been able to see that there can be any difference, save of one degree, between wrong thought and action," he had said to Gabriel the night before they left for Germany, "so I shall not come home while Lily is living in this neighborhood, or until I have obliterated from my mind the hope that she should be my wife, a hope that I know will tempt me every hour until she is married to Andrew Young, a hope which tempts me every minute now, though to me an engagement is a tie so close that already in my eyes, morally, she has passed beyond my reach. I dare not see her again until the recollection that I ever desired to marry her has become a dead thing in my mind, for to me such a recollection, now she is an affianced wife, would seem a spot upon her whiteness, though I think that she has never known that I have loved her ever since she was a child. You know it, Gabriel, and you understand that I would sever myself even from your home here rather than let a wrong thought rest for a single moment where all has been as white as snow. So you see, my Alma Mater, you must bear with me and we will not even speak of Lily. It is, I feel, the only way."

Thus David Kelman had declared himself to Gabriel

Grand the night before they left their home at Inker-vale, and never since had Lily's name crossed his lips.

Then one day in June he read a letter Gabriel handed him and asked her what Priscilla Gray could mean? What trouble was it Andrew Young had been going through for a year, she said, or more?

Gabriel could tell him nothing, except that both Richard and Priscilla Gray were very anxious about Mr. Young, for Lily had seemed unhappy ever since Andrew had left her suddenly and gone to France for a week about a year ago.

David said no more. If he did not, it was because he could not speak of that fierce battle of the heart even to Gabriel, whom he had loved and trusted almost all his thinking life. Nor is it for you or me to ask how he had fought this battle day by day, year in year out. Such things are matters of individual temperament. To David Kelman it was not possible to love a second time, nor could any profession or pursuit take the place that Lily had always held. Yet neither could Lily hold that place, save she were still free to put her hand in his and stand before him as unspotted by his inmost thought as she was in the eyes of the whole world.

Men and women who have a high ideal and are without a true religion to help them hold it up are at the mercy of those sudden passion waves which sweep across the heart of man and plow it deep with pain. Thus, knowing David as we do, remembering the moral standard which was his and the steadfast love of half a lifetime, we understand how it was that his face grew graver year by year and his strong mouth very stern. We understand also that for such a man the battle, though a long one, must hold a mighty

triumph in the end. Step by step, discomfited but not dismayed, perplexed but never overcome, he fought his faithful love of many years, until he thought he stood high upon a rock, far above the reach of passion's storm and the wild waves of man's desire — and none too soon. For now and suddenly a proof of perfectness was asked of him in the name of brotherly love and loyalty.

Andrew Young stood in his consulting-room, mutely craving his pity while he asked his aid, and those who follow further the history of these men will see that right desire, when persisted in, must triumph in the end. How should it not? Born of the true, it is the real. Born of the good, it is the *only*.

CHAPTER XIX

UNMASKED

THE next day brought David Kelman a letter from Lily. She wrote as a child of the woods might write. What did she know, David asked himself, of a city's sin or of his own over-busy life? What did she know of his work and his cares?

"You will take Andrew abroad for a month," she pleaded, "and bring him home quite cured? The wedding cannot be till August now, though I am already twenty-one. That does not matter, so long as Andrew is quite well. He has been away almost a year and we have scarcely seen him for more than a day at a time, yet each treatment has failed as the last. You must heal the scar on his face, David, before it spreads to the other side; then come to our wedding and dance!"

So wrote Lily, half grave, half gay, yet fearful, it seemed to David, all the time. "You must heal the scar on his face, David, before it spreads to the other side." The words seem to ring out as if spoken and to fill the room, shutting away all other sound, for David had seen that scar twelve hours before. Was that then all that Lily knew? Was it all that Richard and Priscilla guessed? . . . "He has been away almost a year and we have scarcely seen him for more than a

day at a time." . . . So David must take him abroad for a month and bring him home quite cured.

David Kelman buried his head in his hands and crushed Lily's note with his heel. A month to wipe out a scar that had seared its way through the flesh! A month to whiten the soul of Andrew Young and place him new-born in Lily's arms!

Then David stood upright and trembled before a terrible foe. Hot anger claimed his every thought, anger against the man whose privilege it was to shelter Lily's life, but who valued his prize so little that instead he caused her pain.

A deep compassion stirred his heart for the woman whose hand he now longed to hold within his own, as he remembered he had often done in their boy and girlhood days while they ran across the hayfields side by side, or climbed a steep hill track. His every sense shouted to him of a happiness which he might have made his own, a happiness that even now was within his reach. Who could help her so well as he? Who could love her as he had loved her almost all his life? Who could or would cherish and protect her so well as he, day in, day out, as long as they both should live?

Lily! Lily! His life, it seemed, had never held another thought. His heart, it seemed, had never known another longing. His arms, it seemed, he must force closer to his side or surely they would reach out with the desire to lift her to his breast. David Kelman's face grew white and a sound as of mighty thunders beat within his ears.

Lily! Lily! He dropped the lids upon his eyes that he might not seem to see her there before him, and

he dropped his hand upon the couch and grasped it with firm fingers that he might not seem to feel her clinging hand hold his. As that shout grew louder in his ears he strode across the room, and, while he forced the name of Andrew Young to rest between his lips, he bade the memory of Andrew Young to stay within his mind. That shout against his ears was changing now. A great confusion and wild tempest beat upon his brain, amid which three names rang out together, his own, Lily's, and that of Andrew Young. Then all at once — a fourth. With the advent of this other name there rushed across his soul a sudden sense of power. Gabriel! Ah! He had forgotten Gabriel Grand.

It was then that his servant entered with a note and quickly left the room again so that he did not see how swiftly the doctor followed him and closed the door, nor did he hear the sound of the lock, as David Kelman sharply turned the key.

Alone once more David stood silently beside the couch, then knelt just there where he had stood so long, knelt and pressed his closed hands upon the soft leather of the cushions, while he raised his head and held his form erect. In the deep silence of a strong man's greatest need he formulated a childish prayer.

"A man must be good," he muttered. "To be a man at all, a man must be good."

He rose later and stood quite still, looking before him out of the window and noting distinctly the unimportant detail of the view that faced him. Here the buildings were uneven in height and less close together than might have been expected in this populous part of London, and Dr. Kelman noticed that right in front

of him each chimney was of a different shape and size. Side by side they stood, each toned by time to a somber shade of brown, dull red or ocher, while there to the left a gray monotone reigned supreme, for all were clothed with a dismal cloud of dirt. Slowly as he counted the chimney-pots, which he did quite consciously but for no reason that he knew, David Kelman became aware that he was looking into the depth of a man's soul, or was it into the purlieu of hell that he gazed? It was natural to him to call a spade a spade, and of late years it had become his habit to analyze his thoughts. He therefore went on looking into this man's soul, though he understood already where the view would end. It was quite simple, so simple that surely all must understand the truth of the matter, just as clearly as he understood it now. The only difference is that David was as honest as a man well may be, and only the few are honest through and through. So it came about that he did not shift his gaze, but continued to search the dark and hidden places of a sin-stained soul which he now knew to be his own. Then aloud and without flinching he voiced the word that he found that morning's happenings had written there.

"I, David Kelman," he said, speaking into the silence of the empty room, "love Lily still as I have loved her for years, but I love her better than myself. I desire most of all to cherish her and shield her from all ill. I desire greatly to make her my wife and carry her away to some safe shelter, where the sun shall drench her from head to foot with its kindly kiss and the sweet breeze blow the clouds of sorrow from her eyes. I cannot do this because she is the affianced wife of Andrew Young. That is the sole reason why I

cannot do it. She trusts me, she always has trusted me. But because Andrew Young exists and is to be her husband, and because it is Lily, good and innocent, that I love, I cannot help her now at all for fear that my help should harm her. One thing only can make it possible for me to do so, the death of Andrew Young. Obviously then," and David found that he was smiling though with bitterness of soul, "I wish him dead. Obviously than I am in heart — a murderer."

That was the word which David read painted plainly upon the canvas of his mind, as his thought lay bare before his now relentless gaze, naked in its horrible shame.

The pity is that more do not face such facts with a directness equally uncompromising. Surely if they would do so the world would be a less unholy place.

"I understand," David muttered. "I understand. Those words are true, quite literally true, 'Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer.' But such things need not be," he added almost savagely. "There is a thing called right, and it is possible of execution."

Now he stood in the middle of the large room and threw his arms on high.

"God!" He cried aloud, it seemed to him, yet his lips were held together, nor did they move save to rest more closely each upon the other. "God! Whoever thou art, whatever thou art, wherever thou art — save Lily, save me."

Then after a pause, when good won a wondrous battle over man's desire, the human bent before a higher power and uttered aloud another prayer. "Save Andrew Young and place him new-born in Lily's arms. Save Lily's pure soul from the thought of my heart! Save Andrew Young from the hand of Cain, from the wish

that would kill in order to have! Save me, wherever thou art, thou saving power, save my better self from my worse!"

Thus prayed the man whom other men pronounced agnostic. So truly enough he was, for he neither knew nor pretended to know, yet longed to understand. But to believe blindly without understanding was not possible to the son of John Kelman or to the man tutored by so deep a thinker as Gabriel Grand.

To whom then was it that David cried in that hour of his strongest need, amid that storm of passion and of pain? He did not know, but slowly he became aware that some sort of answer was his, for he knew now quite certainly that he could be good, that he could love Lily again as he had always done, much better than himself. As though by a flash of brightest light he saw that the lie of Eden had sought to garb itself in robes of white and with subtle blasphemy had named that love which verily is hate, had called that pity which is the foulest cruelty, had veiled in heaven's livery that which drags the souls of men and women through the very depths of hell. Yes, he could be good. He would go to Gabriel, she was always strong and calm.

That day Dr. Kelman's patients marveled at the man. "What is it?" they asked, as they had often asked before, not knowing that here and there a man or woman will mount further in one hour on the ladder which reaches to heaven from earth than others rise in twenty years.

That night David told himself that he must take some definite step that should lead him to safe anchorage for his soul. He was mentally, morally and physically a

much stronger man than most, but he had that day awakened to such a knowledge of himself that his need had been uncovered with uncompromising hand. Loyally, steadfastly he had controlled his innermost thought about Lily, and this year after year: never once had he allowed it to run riot or to master him, for, unusual though it may be, he loved her for what she was in fact and not for what she was, or might have been, to him. He had never regarded her physically. That was one reason why he loved her as much or more to-day than he had loved her years ago. He knew, of course, that her hair shone like burnished copper when the sun caught and kissed it; he knew too that her eyes were deep in color and that her height was almost equal to that of Gabriel Grand, but he had not thought much of these things. It was of Lily, full of a perpetual energy; Lily, ready at a moment's notice to start upon some fresh enterprise; Lily, proud, sensitive and pure; Lily, with a further quality to which he still could give no name, but which made even those who knew her slightly feel that they could trust her every word. It was this that he had always loved; it was beside this that he had longed to spend his life. Being clear of head and direct of thought he understood perfectly that should anything tempt Lily to descend from her high estate, that mental and moral altitude which had always been hers, she would no longer be Lily, but merely a battered remnant of that which he had loved. Nevertheless, it was, he knew, because of the very qualities with which she was so richly endowed that she would suffer when she discovered Andrew's sin; and she would suffer much more than a woman of ordinary caliber under a like afflic-

tion. It was because she had been accustomed to hold her womanhood much higher than even she had known to be the case, that it would now be worse to her than death to find herself the legal possession of one quite lost to truth and even to decency. This David had comprehended the day before at the moment when he had seen Andrew Young wailing at his feet, and now anger rose anew against the man, if such a weak creature could be called a man at all, who possessing Lily could contaminate her life by himself descending to the level of the beast. Thus the war went on. Had those many battles already fought been quite in vain? No, not altogether. The human mind is to a great extent a creature of mere habit, a mechanism that turns most naturally in the direction in which it has been wont to turn. For years he had formed the habit of regarding Lily as something on which his thought must never dwell, and this righteous habit helped him now and made it less impossible for him to win when a great crisis in his life came thus suddenly upon him. But this crisis was not over yet. For many a long day to follow David Kelman wrestled as a man should not be called upon to wrestle twice for the same acquirement. His natural honesty was the highroad on which he finally traveled towards salvation.

"Murderer." He deliberately said the word aloud and looked it in the face. He deliberately turned to meet that from which nine men out of ten will shrink away with their mental glance averted. He said the word first when he realized that he wished Andrew Young to die. It made no difference that he wished him to die in order that Lily might thereby be freed from a future with a man whom he considered

unworthy to touch her hand, one who would make of her life a hell.

He said it again when the thought of a brighter future for Lily sought to disguise itself in a more subtle form, hoping thereby to lull his sense of right to sleep — “Andrew will die inevitably and quite soon if he does not pull up short, and then . . .”

He said it a third time when temptation assumed an argumentative attire. “Why should you try to help him? Why should you try to save his life? Why interfere at all? Why not let things take their course?”

“Because if things are allowed to take their course . . .” David lost no time in answering his own heart as a man makes answer to a deadly foe. “Because to stand by inactive and watch a man kill himself, who has appealed to you for aid, when you may if you will prevent his death, is to become responsible for his death.”

“But,” the silent suggestion of a dishonest world answered softly, “that happens every day. Every day men and women stand by and see a brother speeding to his death and do not lift a finger to prevent it. The cause of death may vary. It may be alcohol, as in this case, but often it is a sin more hidden from the world; and sometimes men and women, in order to save themselves discomfort or to gratify their own sense of enjoyment, will even lead a weaker brother to where the poison may be found. Sometimes they will even hold the potion to the lips which only thirst because they have been taught to thirst, perhaps by the very hand that holds the deadly draught and whose name is often merely Pleasure, though in its heart it

carries deadly pain. Are all these men and women worthy of that foul epithet? Would you name the whole world murderer?"

"He that hateth his brother . . . walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes." David knew the words by heart and they possessed him now, but he made no compromise when speaking to his soul, even as it was his habit to make none when speaking face to face with other men.

"But sometimes those men and women do not hate. They are merely indifferent to all that does not directly concern themselves or forward their own interests, and thus they are deaf to their brother's appeal for help."

"The negation," David answered with unswerving sternness, "is the refuge of the destitute and is too transparent a fallacy to deceive the man whose habit it is to reason with himself. Indifference is simply lovelessness and lovelessness is the first degree of hate, as hate is the first degree of murder."

"How you harp upon the word!" irritated Nerve replied. "Has the sound no terror at all for you?"

"So much of terror has the sound that it bids fair to save me from the deed. I would that more would face sin in the abstract and thus avoid the committal of that which is no less a crime, because its perpetrators work altogether in a mental realm and thus evade detection.

So David Kelman faced his foe and fought it where he faced it, right out in the open.

He wrote to Lily what poor comfort he could, for he heard from Richard Gray that she hugged her sorrow to her heart, although her letter had been so brave.

And still . . . she knew nothing of the wretched truth.

And what of Andrew Young?

What was it after all that seemed to enslave his sense and make him helpless as a little child? In reality there is but one power alone, and not for an instant is it true that man need fall beneath the weight of that which has no mandate from the only King. Thus, having no mandate, evil is merely "outlaw" and cannot rule or ruin the life of any man, once he recognizes that its claims are illegitimate and can have no sovereignty unless he himself accord it a fictitious throne.

CHAPTER XX

MORE INOCULATION . . . YET ALWAYS ONLY THE
DREAM

"It does not seem right to me that you should spend your short holiday like that."

Miss Grand spoke in a troubled voice. Indeed, she was deeply perplexed. Lily had acted, or so it seemed to her, without consideration and had overlooked the fact that a London doctor's holidays are rare and very short. How could she ask David to spend those few weeks abroad with Andrew? She herself had planned for him a short tour in Switzerland, for she knew that he needed rest and refreshment. To travel with such an invalid as Andrew Young would be a severe strain and need constant vigilance on David's part. He must keep a perpetual watch upon the sick man, which would preclude the possibility of any recreation for himself.

"Andrew's valet will be with us," David said in answer to a remark that Miss Grand made after a moment's silence. "I can leave him in his care sometimes."

"Can you trust the man?" she asked. "You know it is an extraordinary case. They do not know what has broken down his nerve."

Dr. Kelman knew well enough. He rose from his seat at the breakfast-table and walked to the window.

"It is, as you say, an extraordinary case," he replied, "I shall of course be on my guard."

"I am troubled for Lily." Gabriel spoke in an anxious tone. "I see that two lives which promised to be very fair are threatened with unhappiness and I find myself helpless to aid either Lily, whom I love, or Andrew, whom for her sake I would do anything to help. Let us hope that he will take to you and give you his confidence."

"I have seldom seen him," David Kelman said. "He may weary of my companionship, but we can only hope and await events. We start to-morrow morning, so I must leave by the five-o'clock train to-day for Inkervale and we shall catch the boat easily."

Twenty-four hours later Dr. Kelman leant over the gunwale and watched the colorless water beneath his eyes. A dreary drizzle fell softly upon the deck. One passenger alone was visible, a man who stood moodily beside the hatchway for a moment and then rapidly approached David.

"Kelman," he said, then paused and laughed shortly, "I believe your views about heredity are different to mine, so you won't sympathize. For once I almost envy you for being an agnostic. My religious training leaves me hopeless where you, in a like case, from your point of view, feel quite hopeful."

Dr. Kelman thought long before he replied. "Your religion appears to me to be cruel in this particular respect, and it is inconceivable to me how you can worship a God who, as you believe, taints the unborn babe with the foul heritage of sickness, or at any rate creates him predisposed to it."

"Then you admit that this craving for alcohol is a sickness and not a sin?" Mr. Young asked eagerly.

"I judge no man," Dr. Kelman answered slowly, "least of all the man who does a thing which it is incomprehensible to me that a man should do; but broadly speaking my experience as a physician informs me that sin and sickness are much more closely connected than the world in general wots of or at any rate will admit."

Mr. Young was silent.

"Kelman," he said later, "you don't know what an awful thing heredity is. The Egauts brought me up on the third commandment."

"Did they?" David answered quickly. "Then how is it you have ignored the latter half, filled as it is with the message of love? And how do you take the statements of Jeremiah ¹ and Ezekiel ² on this subject?"

"What statements?" Andrew looked stupidly at him.

David repeated the verses brightly, but when Andrew answered he spoke like an automaton. The promise contained in the words he now heard did not exist for him. He had never thought of those words, had never read them in fact, and now he could not realize their vital import to the welfare of mankind.

"I don't see what you mean," he said testily, "and it is easy for you to preach. You are not afflicted with an hereditary curse. You have not had to leave the woman you love. Your marriage . . ."

"Shall we walk about a little?" Dr. Kelman spoke sternly. He would not hear Andrew speak of Lily. Such a man was unfit to utter her name. "Mr. Gray," he continued as they paced the deck, and he spoke kindly now, "Mr. Gray told me the night we left

¹ Chap. xxxi. 29-30.

² Chap. xviii.

Inkervale that he knew your father well, and that he was a particularly abstemious man. Further that he had also met your grandparents in Derbyshire, where he tells me your family is well known."

Andrew Young's thoughts flew back to the short visit he had paid, a year ago, to that remote town in France, and he looked furtively at his companion but would talk no more that day.

In a few hours they landed on the Continent and shortly reached their destination. David lunched with Mr. Young and then thought he might safely leave his charge for a time with the valet, in whom he had every reason to repose confidence. Later he bitterly regretted his action. Andrew had been particularly hopeless all the morning, although he had brightened up in an extraordinary manner when he found a man whom he greeted by the name of Trott awaiting their arrival at the station. Mr. Joseph Trott, he had explained to Dr. Kelman, was his business agent for the property that his father had left in the island of Cin. It was most necessary that they should talk several matters over, as he contemplated making a large purchase among the rubber plantations there. David had never heard of Mr. Trott; neither Gabriel nor Lily had mentioned him, nor indeed had Mr. Young referred to him until the moment of introduction.

As Dr. Kelman walked towards the coastline, which here took an abrupt turn to the west, he reviewed the case of Andrew Young as far as he knew it, and said to himself again, as he had said many times before, "What can be done to help such people? Their every hour is a hell on earth, yet we medical men can do almost nothing towards the cure of one of the commonest

and quite the most miserable of all miserable forms of disease, a disease which wrecks annually hundreds of thousands of homes, ruins the lives of men and women, and immerses little children in an atmosphere of vicious impurity, so that they in their turn, having breathed poison sometimes from their earliest childhood, believe that this bestiality is a normal part of their lives."

He cast his eye over a letter, received that day from his friend, Dr. Broadhurst, to whom he had written suggesting that a short visit to the interesting old Belgian town where Mr. Young had decided to stay might be a pleasant break during the hot weather. Dr. Kelman himself had been surprised at Mr. Young's choice and would have selected for his patient a brighter scene and one where more occupation could be obtained.

Since lunch Andrew Young had been in one of his impossible moods, and it had seemed to David that his presence only added fuel to the fire of his unreasoning anger. Nothing that he could say had been of any use in soothing the absurd fear which seemed to possess the young man. Sometimes for hours together this fear held him in its cruel clutch, and of late more frequently. That morning he had cried like a baby, because he believed himself to be a poor man and was convinced that his large income had suddenly been stopped and that he did not possess any money at all. The time Dr. Kelman spent in argument had been fraught with considerable annoyance for both. Andrew suffered because, as he candidly admitted, he believed that money was of more importance to the happiness of a man than anything else.

He had been trained to think so. The Egauts had quite systematically made it their first care and had

taught him to do likewise. They had measured their position among the other residents entirely by the amount of their worldly possessions. The neighborhood was not one in which birth or education counted for much, and of real cultivation there had been almost none. They had watched carefully over their creature comforts. Their house was oppressive in its appointments, and the luxury which speaks only of ease and of pleasure dominated the whole household. They had received the infant, Andrew Young, into their own home solely because it offered them an opportunity of adding to their already ample income in a manner that would cause them little or no trouble.

We cannot wonder therefore that Mr. Young loved comfort and believed that money was in itself something much more important, much more precious than it is. It would never have occurred to the Egauts that it should be regarded simply as a fair and proper medium of exchange, valuable only as a means to a righteous end and a necessary adjunct in the life of a material world, without which men and women cannot do at present simply because it has long been legally recognized by an overwhelming majority as the simplest medium of exchange. Neither would it occur to such people to analyze a matter of this kind. Wealth to them was much more important than anything else, much more real, their only idea, in fact, of substance. Such people are not well informed and are seldom thoughtful. Had anyone, for instance, tried to point out to Mr. or Mrs. Egaut that they were worshipping, as a concrete thing, that which in a great measure exists only as a mental condition, they would have stared stupidly at this would-be informant.

They knew of course that an immense amount of business is done on paper alone, but they were not analytical at all. Had one more thoughtful than themselves pointed out that, while the coinage in existence in their own country can be counted only in tens of millions sterling, the savings of the working classes alone are represented on paper by figures amounting to hundreds of millions, they would doubtless have accepted the facts, but failed to see the only reasonable explanation — namely, that the possession of riches is a mental condition, dependent chiefly on intrinsically valueless bits of paper or ponderous bank ledgers.

Dr. Broadhurst's letter informed David that he would come for a few days. He wrote sadly. His work among the very poor, he said, bore no more fruit this year than last. He had that day paid his weekly visit to a large boys' home, and had left it very depressed.

"I asked," he wrote, "a little chap in whom I take a particular interest, what he would do now the time had come for him to return to his parents. 'Play in the streets,' he replied. 'But on Sundays?' I said, hoping in my stupidity that something of what I had taught might have reached the little lad's heart and lifted it to at least a desire for a life above the gutter. 'On Sundays,' he answered with a grin, 'play in the streets.' 'But,' I protested, 'when you are a man, Dickie, and are too big to play in the streets, what will you do then on a Sunday?' 'Wot father does,' he answered glibly enough that time. 'And what is that?' I inquired, but I might have known the answer the child would give. 'Gets drunk,' he said laconically, but

grinned more broadly and with evident sincerity looked forward to the day when he should be man enough to get drunk every Sunday."

"There must be a way," David Kelman said to himself, as he folded his friend's letter and returned it to his pocket. "There must be a way to stop it. There must be a righteous means of helping such people, a way to enable them to help themselves."

Then he thought again of Andrew Young. He was, he knew, at that moment in the company of a man who appeared to Dr. Kelman to be a most undesirable companion for him, a low-born and ill-bred creature. It had amazed and shocked David to observe their familiar greeting at the station, and when passing the sitting-room window as he left the house he had heard a laugh ring out in a manner that was both unrestrained and objectionable. Yet Andrew Young's real friends were powerless to help him. The law, was, Dr. Kelman knew, rightly enough, cautiously framed. It needed to be so framed, for human nature is eager sometimes to put under lock and key the man or woman who stands in its way or has become a wearisome burden.

Yet a case like Young's was quite unfit to control its own destiny. The man was becoming less of a man every day, a condition of mind unworthy of esteem or affection. Yet it was impossible to defend him from himself. There must be, there surely must be, some way by which such a direful need as this could be met and mastered; some means, said Dr. Kelman to himself, by which such men could be awakened to the horror of the life they led, awakened to fight their own battle or at any rate to range themselves upon the

side of those who were willing to fight it for them: awakened to a steadfast desire to wage a righteous war against the foulness and the folly of a purely animal desire which can have no proper place in the mentality of the race named man.

With his mind filled with the longing to help, and heartsick at his inability even to mitigate what appeared to him to be an almost world-wide curse, Dr. Kelman reached the hotel where they had taken rooms for a week to find that Joseph Trott had left and that Andrew had gone to bed, though the day was not nearly done.

CHAPTER XXI

"THE PESTILENCE THAT WALKETH IN DARKNESS"

— ONLY A DEEPER SLEEP

A few hours later it was obvious to Dr. Kelman that Mr. Young's condition was very serious. The man Trott had evidently done the devil's work and secretly provided the poor victim of disease with the poison that inflames the brain and enfeebles the body of man. Let us not dwell upon the time which followed. It is not choice but a temporal necessity which bids the one who loves his brother glance for a moment at that brother's need, in order, if he may, to mitigate the evil. Dr. Broadhurst arrived the next day and told David Kelman that he was not sure that Mr. Young would recover. It was David's own opinion that only the greatest care and unceasing vigilance would pull him through. An hour's neglect, a wrong step taken at a critical moment, and Andrew Young would die.

So nearly a week passed and it was late afternoon when Dr. Kelman left the room where he had kept a faithful watch for many days and nights.

"You must remain here alone for an hour," he said to Mr. Young's valet. "I wish to walk to the station with Dr. Broadhurst, and then I shall go as far as the Point."

It was three days since he had left the house, and he felt quite sure that he must walk, and walk hard, for an

hour or more, and that he must breathe the fresh air for that time at least, since he knew something of the night's work that lay before him. He immediately concurred when Dr. Broadhurst told him that he thought Mr. Young's friends should be summoned, but he hoped that Lily would not come. It was not fit that she should see what he had seen. It was not right that she should hear what he had heard. It was altogether wrong that any woman should be in the presence of the man he had left upstairs five minutes before.

The train had begun to move a little. In thirty seconds it would be fairly started. In thirty more, conversation with one remaining on the platform would be impossible.

"Kelman," Dr. Broadhurst leant out of the window and spoke suddenly with a curious shyness, "there is one thing that might save him. You ought at any rate to put it before his friends."

David ran beside the train and as he stayed his foot abruptly upon the rough earth and looked up, for the platform was now some yards behind him, he caught two words which the doctor flung through the evening air.

The train was out of sight now but Dr. Kelman still remained there beside the line looking stupidly upon the ground.

"Monsieur is looking for something?" asked a porter as he cast a lazy glance around.

"No, thanks," replied David, as he roused himself and walked rapidly away, following the line as it branched out and skirted the coast.

Two hours later he turned his back abruptly upon the open sea and faced the distant town. The way he

chose lay directly inland and he walked rapidly. He had despatched a brief cable to Lilian before leaving the precincts of the town but he had made no mention in it of any detail. When Dr. Broadhurst, leaning forward as the train left the station, had made in a few words the astonishing proposal that Christian Science should be called in as a last hope for Andrew Young, David had been simply amazed. His friend was the last man, orthodox Christian that he was, whom he would have expected to propose such a thing. Broadhurst's attitude towards the cult was well known to him, and two things were therefore evident: Broadhurst must consider Young's case quite hopeless as far as *materia medica* was concerned, and he must have a much greater belief in the healing power of Christian Science than David had thought possible.

Now for a moment, though only for a moment, we must look into the soul of a mortal and observe its nakedness when tempted by the greatest temptation that can befall the man who loves, and would fain make his own that already possessed by another.

David Kelman passed through a small pine wood and was in the act of crossing an open tract of sandy soil. He could see every object upon the countryside clearly for a considerable distance, the land was so flat and the air so clear although evening was already there. He stood quite still for many moments, and faced the distant downs with his back towards the wood that he had left. He stood still but he trembled where he stood, and his face blanched as he met and grappled with what he declared to be deadly sin. His right hand was tightly shut and held a note he had received that morning from Lily. It was very short.

She never wrote what could be called a letter, nor did she need to do so. A few words in her clear hand, a hand which marked the individuality of the writer, brought her vividly before the reader who might not even have seen her for a long time, for she wrote as she thought and spoke as in fact she was. Certainly David would have known the little letter he carried to be hers, even had it been presented to him in print or type, even had it contained no reference to places, people or circumstances known to them both.

"Lily!" he whispered, "Lily! In a week he may be dead; and in a year . . . we might belong to each other."

David Kelman held his lips together by sheer force of will. He would not whisper those words again. He sought to slay them even in his heart, for he understood perfectly of what he was becoming guilty. But it seemed that for the time being he was not master of his heart. For days and nights he had not slept; his nerves had been strained and his brain alert and over-active all the time. Now it seemed that he was servant and not master, a mere puppet in the hands of passion's fancy.

"Lily," he muttered aloud. "My dear, I have loved you it seems to me a hundred thousand years. In a week . . . in a week, dear, he may be dead. He will be dead. And in a year . . . Lily, Lily . . . in a year . . . you will be my wife."

"It was Christian Science that healed him."

Dr. Kelman suddenly wheeled round and faced, twenty yards away, two men. He observed that the one who had spoken was an Englishman. They crossed his path at right angles and did not notice

him. Yet they helped to save a noble nature in the hour of its most desperate distress, when good and evil met as though upon a battle ground, and each sought to claim the soul of David Kelman and keep it for its own.

He spent that night alone by the side of the now prostrate man whom his world knew by the name of Andrew Young. Lily would arrive the next day, and David Kelman must decide whether he would put before her as a last hope, but still as a possible means towards Andrew's recovery, the proposition that Dr. Broadhurst had made.

"It was Christian Science that healed him."

Whom had it healed and of what? Bah! Some hypochondriac, of course, of some imaginary disorder. But suddenly the face of the stranger who had spoken as he crossed his path that evening rose up and admonished David, for it was not the face of a gullible or a thoughtless man. David did not know until now that he had taken so much note of the Englishman. He now remembered the face as belonging to one whose habit it is to think out for himself any matter of real moment. This stranger's tone had been final and his companion had made no reply to his simple statement. The speaker's attitude had not invited argument. He had spoken very quietly, very simply. He was evidently merely stating what he regarded as a fact.

How those few words rang in David Kelman's ears the long night through and how he wished that he had never heard them! How he wished the train that had carried Dr. Broadhurst out of his sight that day had done so a moment sooner! Then that proposition would not have been made and he would have been free

to let Andrew Young die, free to marry Lily in a year. For she would marry him. He was sure of that now. He was sure now that she would have married him years ago, if he had not let his opportunity slip. To this day she did not know that he cared for her. It would be sweet to tell her, sweet to speak at last of the love of more than half a lifetime.

Ah! But it was starvation, this life that he had led for years — always hungry, never fed, always longing, longing for the unattainable. For that was the simple truth and David knew it now, as once again he faced the secrets of his soul, here, in the dead of night, watching by the bedside of Andrew Young. That was the simple truth, baldly put. He, David Kelman, had hungered for Lily's sweet companionship, longed for it day in, day out for all these years. By sheer force of will he had turned his thoughts away from her. Again and again he had done this because, as we know, he loved her spotlessness. By sheer force of will he had filled his thoughts with other things, but, watching there by Andrew's side, he suddenly laughed aloud, for of what use had all these years of effort been — of what use? Did he not at the moment love her more than he had ever loved her before? Was he not counting the hours until this man should die? Was he not counting the months until he should be able to take care of Lily as she should be taken care of? But this was sin! . . . Yet where could he turn for help? What weapon had he? What defense?

Such is the soul of mortal man when seen in its utter nakedness, a thing unspeakable. Yet let us face it, a thing which moves daily in our midst, but so cloaked by the convention of our world, so covered by de-

ception, self-deceived, that we blindly move among these whited sepulchers which are in point of fact filled full of dead men's bones. The desideratum is not always made of flesh and blood; more often perhaps it is place, power or property; sometimes it is no more than the admiration that another justly wins; but . . . what matter? . . . that other is in the way.

"I have decided not to die." Mr. Young spoke so quietly yet so unexpectedly that Dr. Kelman became almost rigid where he sat, for Andrew was apparently quite sane and fully conscious, yet . . .

"I have," he repeated, "decided not to die, so . . . you will not be able to marry Lily."

Was he, David, awake? Dr. Kelman asked himself, or had he slept and muttered aloud the thought in his heart?

"You have always wanted to marry Lily." Andrew Young spoke rapidly now. "I knew that before I knew her. I heard it the day I viewed The Crag. The man at the lodge pointed to the Rectory and told us the news of all the countryside. She would have married you if I had not been so quick. She was such a child. She did not know you loved her, and I took care that she should know that I did. Well, I have decided to live. Send Morgan here. I mean to get up."

But Andrew Young did not get up. Instead he fell back in his bed and lay as one dead. Dr. Kelman summoned the valet, and together they used powerful restoratives. Presently the sick man appeared to sleep and David again took up his watch alone, but now his thoughts were in a greater turmoil even than before. Had Young been voicing aloud the delirium

that had possessed him now for days or had he during a lucid interval made a simple statement of truth? Was it or was it not true that he had always been aware of his own love for Lily?

David's was a strong nature, as we know, and purer than that of the average man; so it was that he now tried to be loyal to his own high moral code, loyal to the love which, in so far as the love of an ignorant mortal can be, was love of the good. Yet in a minute, in the twinkling of an eye, the habit of years was as though it had never been formed and his thought ran riot, uncontrolled, wild with hope, mad with longing, untempered as is the passion of an untutored mind. Where was he now? The better, certainly, for those years of honest effort; the better, certainly, for each fight fought and won; the better, certainly, for each right thought victorious over wrong; yet, having no fixed rule and no knowledge of unerring Principle, where was he now? Asleep on the watch-tower of his soul, while the error of the ages sought to weave its web about his head and to ensnare him in a great confusion. That web, so light as to be invisible; so strong that man unaided cannot break a single strand; so low that it cages not only head, but heart and hands and feet within its subtle snare, till its victim lies enchained upon the earth; so poisonous that it is well indeed we should remember all the time . . . it is the dream and nothing more; sin is never real, because it is not born of Truth. It is not man nor woman; such are but victims of its falsity, yet the belief in sin most mercifully is punished till it is faced and fought by him who, waking from the dream, knows that man has no power apart from God but has a

power equal to his need when he fights with God upon his side.

"It is not," Mr. Young spoke suddenly again, and this time David Kelman saw that to all appearances he was perfectly sane. "It is not," he repeated, "that I mind the idea of your marrying Lily. Why should I? She will soon hate me, and I can excuse her. I hate myself. I loathe myself since this horror has been branded on my face. Naturally Lily will loathe the sight of me too. Yet it's not my fault. If she had seen my father as I saw him, she would know well enough that it is all inherited."

Ah! Then he was not sane after all. How could he ever have seen his father? As far as David knew Mr. Gray had seen Jim Young shortly before his death and knew that it had taken place a few days after the infant Andrew was born.

"You have never seen your father," Dr. Kelman said quickly. "He died a few days after your birth."

Andrew Young began to laugh. "My father died a few days after my birth?" he echoed. "He did, did he? Then it was not my father, I suppose, that ghastly mass of a man that I saw stupefied with drink, unfit for human eye to rest upon? That, I suppose, was not my father? . . . My father died a few days after my birth! Oh!" he added, and cringed beneath the bedclothes. "Oh! if only he had! If only he had!"

Yet why, Andrew Young, wish for the death of any man? Why not instead lift up thine head above the mist and see man's heritage of love that waits to bless him all the time? Why not arise and face and fight the merely physical, the so-called law of sin which re-

sults in death, fight it with that birthright of true manhood which belongs to thee and thine as to every other child of God? For thus only, as individual man awakes to wrestle for the good, shall the whole race one day be free, knowing as it is known.

CHAPTER XXII

"DRUNKEN . . ."

THAT afternoon Lily arrived bringing old Nana with her. She came by an earlier train than David expected and found him unprepared. Not that she knew this — how should she? She could know nothing of the fierce fight which raged as does a tempest in the torrid zone and plowed the heart of David Kelman as a tornado plows the sea.

He must go downstairs and greet her, and while he traversed that short flight of steps he must decide whether he should or should not reveal to her those words which he had heard: "It was Christian Science that healed him."

"Lily," he said, then moistened his lips. "Lily," he repeated . . . "Andrew is very ill."

"You do not think," Lily's tone arrested him, "that there is anything else that can be done?"

He did not speak. He tried to. He tried more than once, but he could not say a word. Instead he walked towards the door. He had no clear intention in so doing. He knew only that he needed time, that above all he wished to be alone in order to think out again the matter which had occupied his thought for eighteen hours to the exclusion of all else. Should he or should he not advise Lily to call in other aid for Andrew? If he did, the sick man might live; if he did not,

Andrew would certainly die and then . . . he himself would equally certainly marry Lily within the year.

At the door he turned and looked at her. She was standing by the window and the beautiful bright face wore an expression of greater gravity than he ever remembered to have seen on it before. Her eyes were deep with thought and for the moment she seemed to be oblivious of his presence. It was at Lily as he had always known her, and yet at something new that David Kelman looked, and he realized suddenly that this new thing which deepened the shadow in her eyes was the one thing that he had always missed—the one thing in which he had found her wanting. What was it? A greater thoughtfulness? Perhaps! He did not attempt to name it. He had never done so, nor did he wish to do so now. It was there and that was enough for him, enough to endear her to him afresh, enough to make him long to possess her, to keep and cherish her as even he had never longed to do before. Should he or should he not tell her of Christian Science? *Could* he tell her of Christian Science?

Dr. Kelman turned to leave the room. He must be alone, if only for five minutes. He turned towards the open door and stood there stupidly. That stranger who had crossed his path the night before? How well he remembered the man's strong face! Perfectly, and more distinctly still, he now recalled the voice of that passing stranger, for had it not rung in his ears the long night through?

He turned slowly round and walked a few steps towards Lily. . . . Then gradually he began to

laugh, and then . . . either his laughter got beyond control or he made no attempt to silence it.

Lily for perhaps the first time in her life was angry with David Kelman. She had never known him to behave rudely, never conceived that he could be guilty of offering an insult to anyone, much less to one in such distress as herself.

"David," she spoke formally, "I gathered that Dr. Broadhurst's opinion with regard to Andrew's case coincides with your own."

Lily spoke deliberately. She wished to give David time to regain his composure.

"I must apologize," he said. "I have been without sleep for days and have only had a few hours in the fresh air since I came to this town. Will you," he faced Lily all the time but could not lift his eyes to hers, "will you speak to me upstairs in Andrew's sitting-room?"

She immediately left the room with him and a minute later asked herself again what had come to her childhood's companion, to David, the clever, collected man of the world, the quiet, steadfast friend of more than half a lifetime? That he should be weary after his long watch by day and night would not have surprised her, but it would have taken, or so she would have supposed, much more than this to throw David Kelman off his mental balance. Yet he apparently hardly knew either what he said or what he did. She could scarcely follow him, he spoke so incoherently. Ah! Now he was silent and she could observe him better. How white his face looked and how drawn! And was it possible that David Kelman trembled? How cold his hand was and how great was his excitement!

He did not remain still for twenty seconds at a time, and his eyes seemed to her to be the eyes of someone else. In all the years that he had been her friend she had never once known him to be afraid. Now it appeared that he was in a condition of great dread, though it was impossible for her even to guess at the cause of his fear.

"David," she said, "stay here and sleep on this couch, while I go into Andrew's room. Nana has been with him since we came. . . . Or no," she added, "I need not go." For she herself shrank back when she remembered that Nana had told her that Andrew's face was no better — rather worse. "His face," she said, and buried her own in her hands, "is it just the same?"

To her dismay — she was not angry now but horrified — David again burst into laughter. "Just the same as when you last saw him," he shouted, "just the same? No; worse, a thousand times worse, and Lily, you want to save his life. Don't you see, Lily," he rose and faced her, and suddenly she became aware that she was afraid of David Kelman, "don't you see," he whispered, "that the kindest thing for Andrew Young is to let him die? Yes," he spoke emphatically now, though still in a whisper, "that is it, the kindest thing for Andrew is to let him die."

Then in a moment, swift as the lightning streaks across the sky, Lily felt that Andrew's life must at all costs be saved. She did not understand the overwhelming force with which this conviction rushed upon her. No doubt, humanly speaking, it would be an act of cruelty to save the life of Andrew Young, for she had no hope, since receiving David's cable, that he

could be cured. But at least she believed that this sudden collapse might be arrested and his body strengthened and built up, for still she did not know the worst. His future, however, Lily believed would always be pitiable, and yet she knew, in a way that she could not have explained to anyone, that if any stone were left unturned and Andrew's life was thereby shortened by one hour, she would have a sense of shame and guilt. In some strange manner and yet quite clearly she seemed to know that it was not Andrew's life alone that was at stake, but . . . the soul of another.

"David," she said, "what do you feel about Christian Science? Nana wants us to try it. She knows a woman who was healed by it. Do you advise Andrew to call in the aid of a practitioner? Do you believe that Christian Science will save his life?"

"It was Christian Science that healed him." Dr. Kelman muttered the words like an automaton, the words which had rung in his ears all night.

"David, David!" Lily stamped her foot, while sudden tears of anxiety fell from her eyes. "Answer me. You are a doctor. You understand the case. Do you wish Andrew to have the aid of Christian Science?"

"No!"

Had he shouted the word aloud or had he whispered it to his own heart alone? Had he said it at all? David Kelman did not know.

"Do you believe that Christian Science will save his life?" Lily faced him now.

"Of course it will." He spoke aloud this time and knew that he spoke aloud.

"Then, David," Lily's tone was filled with astonish-

ment "why did you not tell me of it before? Why are you against it now?"

"Because it will save his life," and David laughed again. But Lily, supposing that she talked with a madman, or with one who was at any rate unable to sustain a lucid conversation, turned and left the room, then sought Nana's aid.

"Miss Lily," the old woman said, "you must bide by yourself at the foreign hotel for a day, then back to England with that lady who's taking the steamer the morn. My place is by this poor thing's side. You'll be best at home, my dear."

To Andrew it seemed that Nana had on a sudden the strength of a man, for she was no longer feeble nor gentle, nor old, but spoke as a master speaks to the one he is accustomed to command.

"See here, Mr. Young," she declared, "pick yourself up and have done with the drink or you'll lose Miss Lily after all, for I'll tell Mr. Gray the gospel truth. My lamb shall be no drunkard's wife, not if you rage for a week and tear an old woman limb from limb."

To the valet, whose greed had fostered the fault, as old Nana, her wits sharpened by love for her mistress, plainly saw, she paid a full wage and bade him begone.

"Here, Mr. Morgan, you've brought him the poison for months," she said, "behind the doctor's back, and told us lies at Inkervale, and all for the gold he had to give. Go. Live on that gold and, if you can, get your manhood back again while you win a character somewhere else; you'll get no recommendation from here."

On Joseph Trott, who had returned to the town that day, she slammed the hall door.

"I know nothing of you, my man," she said, "and your face is not pleasing to me. Mr. Young is engaged till he leaves this place, and 'tisn't worth your while to wait around; you'll not get a sight o' him at all."

"Nana!" Andrew stood at the top of the stairs. "Is that Mr. Trott you have sent away? I must see him before he goes."

"You'll see no one, Mr. Young, as I told you before, save they pass across my body and bones. Come, man, you talk like a fool. You have but this chance and no more."

"Nana," he wailed, "I would give it up if I could. I hate it all the time, but the devil's too strong for me."

"There's one thing stronger," Nana replied, "than twenty devils and more. I've proved it many and many a time."

"What is it?"

The famished eyes lit up with hope and the man's weak voice was piteous to hear.

"'Tis called religion, I suppose, by those who think that way, but . . ." Nana spoke in gentler tones and her eyes now filled with tears, for her darling's future lay right there all outspread before her, held in the balance of a moment fraught, was it with weal or with woe — right there, at the mercy of a weak man's poor resolve.

"Religion?" Andrew's face was filled with despair and hope fled from his heart. "Religion, Nana. I have prayed and prayed yet sunk each day deeper into hell."

"I don't call it that, Mr. Young," the woman gently said. "To me 'tis a simple little thing which a baby

can do and a child understand. 'Tis just to have the heart quite full of love for God and your brother man. Try it, Andrew Young, and old Nana'll help you all she can. Aye, that she will, you may depend upon it."

So the days became a week and the weeks made up a month, while Nana saved, for the time at least, the life and the reason of Andrew Young, yet . . . lived to rue the day she had done it.

CHAPTER XXIII

A SINGLE CRY FROM THE HEART OF A WORLD

AND what of David Kelman? He left the little Belgian town an hour after his interview with Lily, and even Gabriel Grand knew nothing of him for a month. This did not trouble her. Both she and David were accustomed to go their individual ways and would sometimes leave the home in London at a moment's notice, giving an address on the Continent to which letters might be forwarded. It was, however, a new departure for David to be so long away and to remain silent all the time. Still she would not allow herself to be anxious. She knew him well and she understood more clearly than he was aware that his love for Lily was the love of a lifetime. She knew better than he himself had known until of late that his years of deliberate self-control, his steadfast fight to maintain a righteous attitude, his perpetual effort to wean his thought from Lily and to fix it on other things, had not in reality lessened his love at all, but had merely left him a better man than he would otherwise have been had he allowed himself to drift, as many other men under like circumstances would have drifted, a derelict upon the ocean of human passion at the mercy of every wind and wave.

It was late in October. Miss Grand was standing by the window in her sitting-room wishing, as she often

did, that she could ease the heart of Babylon of the burden of its woe, when David stood beside her.

"Gabriel," he said, "you did not hear me come in. How cold it is in England! Shall we have a fire?"

Two hours later they sat down to dinner and David Kelman heard from Gabriel that Andrew had recovered his health, and that his life was quite out of danger.

"Thank God for that."

Gabriel's attention was arrested by the fervor with which David spoke, but presently, as they stood for a moment beside the fire after Miss Grand had risen to say good-night, David said a few words that revealed to her all, or almost all, the story of the last five weeks.

"I have learnt," he said, "that St. John's teaching is true; the man who hates his brother man remains in that outer darkness where no knowledge is."

He turned from her and slowly paced the large room, which like the rest of their home was free from superfluous furniture though well supplied with all that was needed both for comfort and grace.

Again he spoke, and Gabriel noticed for the second time since his return that his face and voice were now those of an older man. His was now the countenance of one who passes through deep waters, yet in some way he seemed to have gained in mental power of late.

"Somewhere," he said, "and here and now there surely must be a way out of this cruelty, this tangled wilderness of tangled thought in which we mortal men and women live. Year after year we are born only to wed, to breed, to suffer and to die. Well might that ancient mental anatomist declare that a man hath no

preëminence above a beast. Somewhere there surely must be rest, even in this world, for the starving soul that desires not to sin. Somewhere, even now, there surely must be strength for the infirm of purpose, aye, and strength of those whom men deem strong and who yet know themselves to be weak as the unborn babe when the enemy comes in as a flood. It seems to me, Gabriel," he added passionately, "that I have looked into my own soul and found it made of all that I have loathed for years. What is worse, it seems to me that, as I look into my soul and see it in its horrible reality, I am but gazing at the soul of man as it is when stripped of convention's covering. This hate of Andrew Young is sin and no less criminal because mental only. The trouble is that my sin is in a degree the sin of a hundred thousand others, and no less a sin, no less a crime because usually it remains hidden to the world at large; aye, and hidden to the perpetrator too. Oh, surely," he cried, "surely there is help, somehow, somewhere here and now, for those who like Paul exclaim: 'The good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do.' It is not possible, it is not conceivable," he added vehemently, "that a man should be a mere puppet in the hands of that from which he desires with all his heart to be freed, and yet I have a conviction born of years of futile labor that I shall never cease to love Lily until I learn to love something which stands as high above her as do the heavens above the earth. Just lately," he said, as he paused by Gabriel's side, "I have felt that there is hope. I have cried day and night, even aloud, when alone up there among the Swiss mountains, to the great First Cause, though I know not what he is, and told him, as a child would tell its mother,

all my need. I have laid Lily at his feet and prayed that he would keep her safe and shelter her so closely that no disloyal thought of mine might reach her or pollute her purity. I have taken my whole being and laid it prostrate in his presence and wept, and asked for peace, and yet to-day, Gabriel, to-day, I love her more, I think, than yesterday. I believe that I shall love her until I die. I believe that I shall love her after death. Death!" he repeated the word slowly. "What is Death? To me it is not oblivion; I am as sure of that as of my present existence, but I am sure of nothing further. Yes, of one other thing I am convinced, Death will not free the imprisoned thought nor give rest to the troubled soul. Why should it? There is no knowledge in the grave, no fruitage grows from inactivity, no sane man wanders into outer darkness when searching for the light. Somehow, somewhere," he repeated his piteous cry in tones deep with the pain of years, "there is, there surely must be, a better way to a better life than through this process which we name death."

Gabriel knew that her lips quivered and that if she would comfort David in this hour she must see to it that the hot tears that filled her eyes did not fall.

"David," she waited, and now her voice was firm and filled with its full measure of soft tone and richest substance. "Dear, I believe, I am not yet sure, but I hope that I have found that which will give Lily back to you in such a way that you will not fear to love her, will not fear to see her, if need be, day after day and year after year. Yet for a time it may seem to put a world of worlds between you."

"What is it?" David's tone was that of a famished

man, his eyes were those of almost a lost soul. "Gabriel! What is it that you have found?"

A servant entered the room and handed Dr. Kelman a sealed envelope.

"The gentleman will not give his name, sir, but orders me to say that he is well known to you and has just arrived from the Continent.

"I will see him." Miss Grand spoke quickly and motioned to the man to leave the room. No eye other than her own should look upon David Kelman in this hour of distress.

"It is from the Princess," David said as he read the note. "I saw her often while away this time. She has been anxious about the young King for weeks."

"Do not disturb your master. He wishes to be alone." Miss Grand gave the order as she passed swiftly through the hall and entered the drawing-room. She remained there only a few minutes in conversation with the stranger, who upon her arrival requested her to summon Dr. Kelman immediately.

It was some time now since David Kelman, dissatisfied with the results that he observed in his profession as a physician, had decided to devote himself chiefly to surgery. Very rapidly he became known as the rising man, and to-day he made a hurried journey on the Continent in answer to the summons that had reached him the night before while he conversed with Gabriel Grand.

A few days later he bent before a royal mother bidding her a short farewell. In silent gratitude she held his hand in hers, while in low tones she thanked him for saving the young King's life.

"My son and I," she said, forgetful of all except her gladness and her love, "owe you more, it seems to me, than we can now repay. Some day perhaps you will let me be of use, should an opportunity occur."

"Madam," Dr. Kelman answered instantly, "the gift of a steady hand and a certain celerity is all that I possess, added to that degree of knowledge which is obtainable by any man who cares to work for it. Here I have but done the lesser part. The greater is still to do and it needs a watchful eye and a constant, loving care. His Majesty must now be nourished and kept happy all the time. No operation can be deemed successful until the patient stands before the world as strong or stronger than heretofore."

"But you," the mother pleaded, inspired by a sudden fear, "you will return to watch the case?"

"Madam," he answered gently, "certainly I will return. But were I to visit the sickroom every day I still could only give the order which other hands must execute."

Once more the mother pleaded, for she valued the gentle strength she saw in the eyes that looked so straightly into hers.

"Come back," she said, "as quickly as your London work permits."

To the nurses left in charge Dr. Kelman spoke a moment later, but briefly, and in a manner new to them. Was ever an order so sternly given? Was ever a command so strange as this? They must not only watch and never weary, it would seem, they must not only work and never tire, but they must love and cherish as a mother might the life entrusted to their care. His

work was done, he said, but theirs was all to do and it was — how strange was a declaration such as this! — by far the greater half and might only be accomplished, or so this Englishman declared, by those who were ready to work and wait and watch.

The women looked into each other's eyes, and one followed softly to the door and stood upon the stair while David Kelman passed out of her sight.

"I understand at last," she said, "why this English doctor always brings his cases through. He loves the patient all the time."

The other woman laughed and tossed her head, then made a ribald jest, and with it fresh upon her lips went into the room where only purity and peace should enter in.

But love is stronger after all, and, when Dr. Kelman came again, the tears of gratitude were chased away by the smile of quiet certainty and hope fulfilled, for the royal party rode through the city's midst; and, while the old streets rang with cheer on cheer, women's eyes grew soft and men smiled a kindly smile when they noted the honored guest who rode side by side with their young King. For had not the English doctor saved his Majesty's life in spite of all their fears, in spite of their dread of death?

.

At Inkervale the hours were all too short for Nana and Priscilla Gray. The summer had come and would soon be gone and this was Lily's wedding day. Neither Gabriel nor David were present. The latter, Miss Grand wrote, had been summoned abroad and she awaited his return.

Old Nana's face was wreathed in smiles, while she

strangled the fear at her heart and scolded herself for the tears that would fall when she thought of the years to come, aye, and of those years which had been — of Lily, a dimpled, rosy babe; Lily, a loving, laughing child; Lily, a maiden sweet and gay; and lastly Lily, a woman full-grown, with sometimes a woman's fear in her eyes. Ah! she would be her Miss Lily no more; no more would *she* chide and cheer, comfort and bless. Her Miss Lily would soon be wife to the man who now awaited her coming, a man who meant to be good, if he could, for the sake of his beautiful bride. Yes! Andrew Young was himself again and valued once more, as his greatest joy, the love of which Lily's heart was so full. Why should Nana fear at all? She dried her eyes and gave her mistress a soft kiss, then bravely went her way; she knew now what she had to do, even the thing she had always done — never to weep, but instead, ever to watch and pray. What if her form was a little bent? What if she faced a lone old age? She still was young enough, for her heart was true as steel, to love another better than herself. So . . . Nana's face was wreathed in smiles, for surely, surely she need not fear. Mr. Young had told her he felt himself again.

Yes, Andrew Young knew well enough the value of Lily's love. Once more it was all the world to him. And the scar on his face was almost gone, and . . . Lily would be his wife at last. For her dear sake he could and would be good. She knew nothing of what had been. David and Nana alone were aware of the horrible past, and David and Nana were both his friends and would help him again should the devil seem strong. But that would not, could not occur. How

should any man ever be tempted to sin with Lily's white life by his side?

So thought Andrew Young as the marriage bells rang out with a merry clang, again and again, then ceased to ring, while the village was gay with laughter for many an hour that day.

Thus the autumn came and the autumn went; now the winter was here, now gone. That spring the days were dark and cold, and the summer that followed, no summer at all. Autumn again, then winter and spring, and with it the birth of Lily's child, and after that . . . a hideous time of hideous woe!

CHAPTER XXIV

MIASMA . . . THIS ALSO IS THE DREAM

It was, as we know, nearly two years since Lily had become the wife of Andrew Young, and a week ago David Kelman had received a letter from Inkervale. Mr. Gray begged that he would come to the Rectory, as he wished to consult him about Andrew's health. That was all Richard said, but David could read between the lines only too well.

A letter from Dr. Broadhurst lay at his hand; he wished, it appeared, to see him that evening. Well, the request came opportunely; David would seek his aid for Andrew. Broadhurst knew the case and his greater experience. . . . David's thought was suddenly arrested; it was Broadhurst who, two years before, had made the proposal which he had then so deliberately swept aside.

It was five o'clock and Dr. Broadhurst's wife arranged the closed curtains more cozily, then sat by the fire awaiting the sound of her husband's latchkey in the lock. The copper kettle already boiled upon the trivet and she would make his tea the minute he returned. He was later than usual to-day, and, directly he entered the hall, she saw that he was very tired. For twenty years these two had loved each other and she knew much better than a wife sometimes knows just how to meet her husband's need. She took his hat and coat in

silence, though with a welcoming smile, and then made the tea at once, pausing just a moment on her way to the fire to lean over his chair and rest a kiss upon his forehead.

"Dear," he said tenderly, in reply to her greeting, and that was all.

Later, when the maid had come and gone and the tea-tray had been removed, Mrs. Broadhurst seated herself quite close to her husband's chair. He looked a little rested now but no less troubled, and she knew that he would be more quickly freed from the anxiety that pressed upon him if they could talk over the reason of his perplexity.

"This is not your day for the East End," she said, "but I fancy you have just been there."

"Yes." Dr. Broadhurst said no more, but rose and walked restlessly about the room.

"Come upstairs," his wife suggested, "and have a game with Tom. That always rests you best of all."

"No," he answered shortly. "I could not bear the sight of his strong limbs nor the sound of his jolly voice just now. You don't know," he added hastily, "what I have seen to-day, and I am so helpless to aid these wretched creatures in the least."

"Is that quite fair to yourself?" His wife spoke gently yet meant to win her point. "You give those children every moment you can spare and you know that you have saved more lives than one."

"I know," he answered almost savagely. "I have saved many lives and thereby done the devil's work. How he must laugh when he sees me playing the game for him!"

"Arthur! Let us talk of something else; next week

we will go to the Isle of Man and let the stiff breeze blow the cobwebs from your brain." Mrs. Broadhurst spoke tenderly and slipped her arm through her husband's as he passed her chair.

"You do not know," he repeated, "you have not seen the sickening sights that I have seen for years. We call them children, these products of loathsome dens, this offspring of drink-sodden man; yet often they are scarcely human. Legs they have and arms and eyes, a mouth, a nose and a mass perhaps of tousled hair. But what of the legs? Can they hold the body up, weak and crooked as they are and sometimes almost unclothed with flesh? Arms they have, but where is muscle, sinew, strength? And the eyes—ah! the eyes are worst of all." And Dr. Broadhurst closed his own, while two pictures painted themselves upon his brain. Upstairs was a bright and airy room, and romping with a loving nurse was his only child, the sturdy boy of six who, with his round strong limbs, merry voice and joyous smile, was the greatest treasure of his life, while there, not three miles distant from him, was another child of six. It could not walk and it could scarcely talk. Its scanty hair was lifeless tow, its face expressionless, while its eyes were almost colorless. His dog, Frolic, stretched there upon the hearth, had more strength than that child and never a moment's pain. That was the awful part of the picture he had lately seen. Those creatures bred in dirt, brought forth by desire, knew for the most part no power but the power of pain. Scarcely one of those fifty children whom he had seen to-day knew good from bad. How should they when for them each day was wholly bad?

"Dear," Mrs. Broadhurst touched her husband softly on the arm, "there is a double knock. I have just remembered you are expecting Dr. Kelman now. Shall I leave you here with him?"

Dr. Broadhurst's face brightened suddenly. David Kelman was a man he had loved for many years. He himself was a connection of Richard Gray and had met David first when a mere boy.

"No," he answered quickly, "stay here. . . . Or no," he added hastily, "come back later. I have decided that I must do something definite, and I am glad Kelman could come to-day. It is good of him to spare the time."

"Arthur, you have spared day after day for years. He is quite young, with all his life before him. Surely. . . ."

Dr. Broadhurst kissed his wife and smiled. "You do not know," he whispered, for the front door was open, "where Dr. Kelman stands. He rises every day by leaps and bounds."

David Kelman was seated now in earnest conversation with this friend so much older than himself. Together they sought to probe the depth of a problem which they well knew had defeated thoughtful men and loving women many a time before and will mayhap do so again. So far they found no remedy for the abomination of desolation they both knew was to be seen upon every side by all who cared to search the heart of any crowded city slum.

"The thought that troubles me is this," the older man spoke despairingly, for he had battled with this point perpetually and still had found no solution to his question. "I go down there," and he waved his hand

towards the east, where he worked as a volunteer, "and I see these creatures, human beings they are called, who if left alone would rot and die. I, and others like myself, step in and say, 'You shall not die, but live.' And the majority do live, that is the awful part; they live just long enough to breed if not to marry, at least just long enough to start, each one of them, another foul stream of so-called life — life which, like their own, has no intelligence, save that of sin and pain, and ends in early death, yet — not until it has bred again. And so the devil's dance goes on among a race called human beings, while here, a few miles further west, my dog and yours are better cared for, better mannered, better taught and fed, aye, and breed a much more healthy progeny. Of course," he added more quietly, "from a purely humane point of view we are doing a cruel act, when we say to children such as these, 'You shall not die but live.'"

"What would you do?" Kelman asked him gravely. "They might die sooner certainly if medical science did not interfere, but while the death would perhaps be a less lingering one, it would be fraught with greater pain."

"Kelman," the other answered passionately, "the death those creatures die is much too slow. In common mercy the lethal chamber should be theirs. For otherwise they breed, as you know, until the third generation."

"No, Broadhurst, no!" David Kelman rose and spoke in a tone of decisive protest. "No!" he repeated. "It is right that man should live, not die. There must be, there is a better way to save him from

pain than the lethal chamber can provide. Why should the poor things not be cured?"

"Cured, man?" Dr. Broadhurst shook his head. "Kelman, if you know a better way, a way to cure the cripples I have seen, then proclaim it quickly and from the housetops. I have worked among the slums for fifteen years and I long for a devastating fire to burn the rabbit-warrens down."

"No!" Dr. Kelman spoke vehemently. "Of what use? Enough life would be left in the ashes of the past to build a hundred slums. The remedy must reach the cause. To deal only with effect is to break the weed off high above the ground, while the root lies deeply buried in the soil."

"The cause?" His companion was silent for a time then rose and paced the room with thoughtful steps. "The cause, my friend, is old as sin. How deal with that? The clergy and lay workers are dealing with it all they can. They have been doing so for years, but . . . the rabbit-warrens grow no fewer and the creatures that infest them grow more feeble and more foul."

"I have a firm conviction," the younger man smiled now, "indeed it is an old conviction too, though I do not know where I got it from, because as you are aware I am not a churchman like yourself, but I am convinced that the thing that is manifestly wrong can somehow be put right. I am as sure of this as I am sure of my own existence, because I have a further certainty that the First Cause, whoever, whatever, he may be, is reasonable and just. That is why I am unorthodox. I really do believe that there is, hidden away somewhere

among the muddle of our world, a definite law of decency and order and a reasonable governing power — a power to whom dirt, disaster and disease, poverty, pain and death are all alike abhorrent. But it is late now," he added, thoughtful for the elder man's evident fatigue. "Miss Grand told me to say that we shall be so glad if you and Mrs. Broadhurst will dine with us one day soon. Why not to-morrow? I want to ask you about a case with which you are partly familiar. It is a common story, but in some respects it seems to be peculiar. Perhaps your wide experience in the slums may help me."

CHAPTER XXV

EYELIDS WEIGHTED BY A WORLD

DINNER was over, and the small party were seated in the library, when Dr. Broadhurst looked thoughtfully at David Kelman.

"Both you and Miss Grand," he said, "are great puzzles to me. You tell me that you have no religion, yet you each govern your life severely and, as far as I can gather, by a religious code. I often hear you quote as your authority the very Bible which I use."

David smiled.

"Miss Grand," he said, "brought me up upon the story of the Nazarene but directed me to the teachings of the Gospels as if to a grand philosophy. I cannot understand why more do not study the life of Jesus as they study the theories of the philosophers."

"You mean, of course, unorthodox men like yourself? The Church of England teaches us that Jesus is God."

"That is why I call myself agnostic. I cannot follow you when you tell me that the Cause of all creation, which you will admit must also be its very life, became confined in the finite form of the man Jesus and died. Had this been so the world should in all reason have collapsed when Jesus of Nazareth was crucified. Also you call God infinite, and my reason rejects, as I have

said, the confinement of the infinite within the finite form of a mortal man."

Dr. Broadhurst did not reply. He himself had never attempted to reason about these questions at all. He would not have accepted a statement upon the ordinary matters of life that he considered unreasonable, but in this matter of religion he had been brought up to consider that it was unnecessary, indeed undesirable, that a man should inquire too far. No doubt some day everything would be made clear.

"Meanwhile," he now remarked to David Kelman, "we must have faith."

"But what is faith," Miss Grand asked, "such faith as that? Is faith then ignorance content to worship ignorantly? Is it then blindness, following quite blindly it knows not what? If so, how can the man who without question follows he knows not what, be sure where such a guide will lead him in the end? How should he know that it is good that he follows, if he have no knowledge of its nature or its *modus operandi*, but must merely do as others do, accept almost superstitiously that which offers no proof of its truth: accept as good that which leads man only to the grave?"

"Then how do you regard Jesus of Nazareth?" Dr. Broadhurst asked. "I notice that you always speak of him in a way that is rather startling to the orthodox mind, and yet I have sometimes thought your veneration for His life is as great as my own."

"I regard Jesus as quite the most profound and much the kindest man that the world has ever seen. I wish that it might hope to see another half as good. His philosophy appears to me to be a transcendental

idealism, too beautiful and grand for such as you and I to follow, and yet I wish it were not so. I would give almost all that I possess to be able to heal sick people with a touch as he appears to have done continually."

"You do not hold that awful theory that He was a mesmerist?" Dr. Broadhurst's tone was deeply shocked.

"No, I am sure he was not that," Miss Grand replied with emphasis. "No mesmerist could ever have been so dignified and calm, so pure and so perfectly good; nor would he teach obedience to the will which Jesus spoke of always as his Father's. No, he was, I believe, opposed to all such powers of darkness as that. The acts of his students made that clear, as for instance in the case of Paul's rebuke to Elymas. I confess however that I do not understand at all by what method the early Christians actually healed the sick."

"Then you believe in the miracles? I am surprised at that." Dr. Broadhurst replied, turning with an inquiring look towards Dr. Kelman.

"I do not believe in them as you who call them miracles believe," David answered. "I do not accept the statement, for instance, that a law of nature was suddenly reversed when Jesus walked upon the waves. I believe that there is a reasonable explanation for everything he did, and I believe this because nothing else would seem to be in accord with his whole character."

"But you do not know what this reasonable explanation is?"

"No, I do not. I wish I did. I cannot understand why the world has not found it, though; I am as certain that it exists, as I am that you and I are here to-day.

I have, however, nothing on which to base my conviction except a settled certainty that the power which you call God is a reasonable Being."

"I don't see much difference," Mrs. Broadhurst remarked with a smile, "between our blind faith and your settled conviction."

"Yes," Miss Grand answered, "there is a difference. Your faith is the outcome of certain teachings that your mind has received at the hands of mortal man. Other men and women taught you when you were a child to accept a mass of contradictions which they named religion. When you grew older you apparently went on accepting these merely personal opinions, never attempting to understand a single point in detail for yourself; yet I very much doubt if you would, or indeed could, allow those very men and women to dominate your thought on any other subject in the world. Should those people attempt to instruct your husband on a medical matter, he would at once require some proof upon their part of their claim to be able to do so. Only a greater knowledge, for instance, of the subject in question would in his opinion warrant any man in teaching him what to accept and what to reject. Yet you do not always ask even the proof of a nobler life from those who teach the dogma of this thing that men call faith. Where did they in their turn get the teaching that they passed on to you? Was it not from other men and women at least no better qualified than themselves; no more able to prove the truth of their theories than the orthodox Christian of to-day."

"Very well, but where do you get your settled conviction from?" Dr. Broadhurst smiled this time.

"Ah!" David Kelman spoke gravely and rising

from his seat slowly paced the room. "I do not think that I can tell you that. I can only tell you that I did not receive it from any mortal man or woman!"

"Not from Miss Grand?" Dr. Broadhurst questioned in surprise.

It was David's turn to smile now.

"Come into my room," he said. They crossed the hall to the library and David continued: "You do not know Miss Grand. She is incapable of dominating the thought of even a boy so young as I was when I first came to England. Her idea of ethics may be summed up in a few words — a morality so high that it insists that a man should watch his thought with as much care as he restrains his action: a freedom so complete that she admits it can only come about as a result of this high morality."

"But your views are much the same as hers."

"Yes, but they are the result of a mutual threshing out of the problem of life. They do not satisfy either of us; they are merely the best that we have so far arrived at and . . . they leave the door wide open for hope, a blessed visitant, as you yourself, a medical man, will admit."

"But my blind faith," the word rankled even in Dr. Broadhurst's kind nature, "leaves the door wide open for hope also."

"Ah, but, not here and now," Kelman replied. "You anticipate quite certainly a thing called death."

"Why, man alive, so do you, surely?"

"I cannot say that I do not," David answered slowly, "but I can say with my whole heart that I quite definitely rebel against corruption and consider it both unrighteous and unbecoming to the status of man. I never

remember the time when I did not resent death. I always objected to it, and that quite definitely. But," he added in a low voice, "let me talk to you about our friend Andrew Young. I know very little of the case up to date, and, though Miss Grand has heard from Miss Gray to-day, the letter does not mention Mr. Young. It is possible therefore that I am needlessly alarmed."

CHAPTER XXVI

THE DEEPEST SLEEP OF ALL

As the weeks passed, bringing no further news from the Rectory, David Kelman told himself that all was well; he had been unnecessarily anxious. Then one day Lily, whom he supposed to be at Inkervale, stood before him with her baby in her arms and old Nana by her side.

"David," she cried, "they tell me there is no other doctor so clever as you are." She glanced around the large consulting-room, but she was weakened by the hurry of her flight and the horror of all she had left at home and hardly spoke coherently.

Later they talked as doctor talks to patient when a broken heart seeks his poor aid. For what could David do? Clever though he was, he knew no certain cure for this.

"Is it hereditary?" Lily faltered in her speech as she held her baby closer to her heart.

"No," David answered roughly, as a man will answer sometimes when warding off a thing he greatly fears. "No. Why should it be hereditary?"

"Nana says," Lily spoke as one who scarcely knows the meaning of the words he utters, yet knows they hold an import full of pain, "Nana says she has seen the curse of drink go always from the father to the son."

"It is a lie. It is not always so and Andrew has not been drinking long, you say."

"But it is often so and I am terrified for Joan. I would rather have her die than see her as I saw Andrew yesterday. You do not know, David. You have not seen what I have seen! You did not hear what I heard Andrew say."

It happened in a moment. David had never seen man or woman fall so suddenly before, but even as she fell Lily clasped her baby closer to her breast.

"Nana, take the child." The doctor lifted Lily in his arms and rested her upon a couch. "Take the child upstairs and give it to the maid, then come back here at once."

David Kelman had ordered the old nurse to take the infant away, impelled by his anxiety to ensure quiet for Lily, but the next instant he regretted his action, for he immediately realized that they were in the presence of a danger which before he did not dream could ever exist for either of them. Lily rested upon the couch, conscious now, but weak as a little child, and the man's whole heart rebelled against her state. At that moment she spoke.

"David, I feel so hopeless. You must help me. Who else can?" She lifted her hand and clung to his, but David instantly loosened her clasp.

Yes, he could, and would help her. Ah, the mercy of it, this torrent that now sought to surge like a mighty flood about his path; he had fought it from the first, even when only an embryo thought, so that to-day in that hour of dread temptation David Kelman knew the mighty truth of the simple statement that a man is

not suffered to be tempted above what he is able to bear.

What if this man's eyes grew moist at sight of a woman's woe? What if his face were white as hers? To-day he could help her, and he would.

But Lily could not understand his silence, nor why he seemed so stern.

"You men have no heart at all," she cried, "no pity for a woman's pain."

Upstairs the babe's young life had been disturbed and with that mighty weapon, the inarticulate, she made it clear to Nana that, though so young, she would have the arm she knew and trusted close about her and would rest her head upon no stranger's breast. So it was that many minutes passed before Nana could return, and when at last she did, and kneeling put both arms about her mistress as she sat upon the couch, the woman never guessed that for ten minutes or more a man had stood on the brink of hell, yet, looking upward all the time, had fought his way to heaven.

"My lamb," she whispered softly, "come with me and rest while baby sleeps. Bide thee quiet, dearie, bide thee still," she said in soothing tones, for now Lily's sobs shook her from head to foot. "Hush, my lamb! There's nought to fear with Nana by thy side. Bide thee still and rest awhile."

They were in the drawing-room now and Nana placed soft cushions under Lily's head and threw a warm rug over her shaking shoulders.

"There, dearie, there; rest quiet while Nana sings thee to sleep with the songs my darling used to love."

The old woman's voice was neither young nor strong,

but it was pure in tone and enriched by the thought at her heart, and it brought swift comfort to Lily's troubled soul. She felt safe here with Nana's arm so close about her and Nana's hand softly smoothing the hair above her brow, and was not David, too, quite near by, there in the room below? There was comfort in that thought, too, for all he had seemed so stern.

And David? Nana had not noticed him when she entered his consulting-room, or she must have asked herself what ailed the doctor that he looked so strange.

An hour later the faithful woman took her mistress by the hand and bade her return to Inkervale. Lily for the moment went where she was told, but that evening she stood in Miss Priscilla's room and cried aloud in her pain.

"How long," she said, "have you and Uncle Richard known this?"

Miss Gray bent her head and held it resolutely down for she would not face the sorrow in the other's eyes.

"Richard and I," she faltered, "have feared of late . . ."

"Richard and I?" Lily mocked and mimicked her in bitter wrath. "What have Richard and I feared of late? To tell the wife of Andrew Young what he was doing all this time? And yet . . ." For the moment the anger was all gone and the suffering woman bent her form over the high back of a great arm-chair, while her voice fell to a feeble wail. "And yet, Aunt Priscilla, surely in all the world no one had a greater right than I to know."

"Lily, Lily!" Miss Gray turned at bay and tried to justify her brother and herself, for the sight of

Lily's agony would kill her if it did not cease. "My darling, how could we tell you such a thing as that, until you grew quite strong again? Baby is so young, and it is only lately that we have felt quite sure."

Poor Miss Priscilla? Your Lily asking for bread is given only a stone and left hopeless as when she came.

"Uncle Richard, I have been to David and to Aunt Priscilla. Surely you can help me. Someone must, if only for my baby's sake." Lily's voice was harsh with hate till it broke into a moan of desperate despair as her body, poor puppet of her pain-fraught mind, quivered slightly, then grew cold from head to foot.

But Richard could not help her either, for all that he was a parish priest. Had he not watched this sin for years but seldom seen it cured?

"My dear," his every tone was soft yet deepened by the sorrow at his heart, "of course we both will help you all we can. There are places where such people go and . . ."

"But Nana says," she cried, "this can't be cured. It has been going on too long; she thinks secretly for a year or more."

"Ah, no! Not that. I only noticed it two months ago," Richard Gray protested, though with weakness in his tone, for he feared that Nana spoke the truth.

"Oh, Uncle Richard!" Lily threw her hands upon her eyes. "You do not know, you cannot guess, what it means to me to be a drunkard's wife."

"Hush." Had Richard ever spoken quite so harshly to a woman as he spoke to Lily now? But he could no longer bear to see the wild grief on her face or hear

the terror in her voice. "Hush! You must not call him that."

"Not call him that?" The wife of Andrew Young sprang to her feet, while scorn flashed from her eyes and hottest anger from her lips. "Not call him that? Oh, you have not heard what I have heard. You have not felt what I have felt. You have not seen what I have seen — a drunkard's hand strike a baby at the breast. Ah, fool," she cried, "to let my love so blind me! Thrice fool. To love him even when he lied to me, for now I think my hate will kill us all."

"Lily!"

Priscilla Gray stood at the open door with Lily's baby in her arms and the storm-tossed barque answered to this gentle touch upon its helm, as Miss Priscilla knew it would. Soft tears rained in a merciful shower from Lily's burning eyes and chased the scorn away, while a mother's kiss fell upon a child's brow and saved a soul from hell.

Thus must it ever be, for Love is master after all and brings the light that ousts the darkness at every turn. For what is darkness? Absence of the light, mere negation, that is all, nor can be for a moment affirmation. What if it seems to cloud the life of man? The sun is shining all the time.

CHAPTER XXVII

CONFUSION

DAVID KELMAN sat in the Rector's study at Inkervale, while Richard and Priscilla Gray sought his advice on behalf of Andrew Young.

"Did Lily tell you how it began?" Mr. Gray asked David. "I feel that there is something about the case which no one understands. Andrew came back from a week's visit to the Continent about a year before his marriage a changed man. He came back in an extremely nervous state, but would never speak of his visit to anyone. He seemed to be terrified of such absurd things. He was afraid of losing his money, afraid of losing his good looks — you know how handsome he was — and most of all afraid of alcohol. Lily could not of course understand it at the time, but she remembers now how angrily he ordered his butler one day when we lunched at The Craggs, not to put wine on the table; and often since their marriage he has talked to her of the power of drink and the horror of it."

From Nana, Dr. Kelman had already heard much more. Her master had, she told him, a fixed belief in heredity, had a fixed idea that both his father and a great uncle had been slaves to this craving.

This was a queer notion and quite a delusion, as Dr. Kelman knew. Richard Gray had known Andrew's

father well and knew that English Jim was always an abstemious man, very straight and honest, too, though not at all clever. As it happened, Mr. Gray had also known all about Jim Young's people and had met them in the north one summer before he went out to Cin. That was how he came to consent so readily to Lily's engagement. All this Miss Priscilla now told David.

"Then what makes Andrew declare this weakness is hereditary?" he asked. "He does believe it to be so, I know, and says it is no use his fighting against it, because it has been the curse of his family for generations."

"He connects the skin disease with it," Priscilla Gray answered, "and is equally sure that this is hereditary too. Indeed, he has felt quite hopeless about it from the first."

"Mr. Gray," David answered, turning to Richard, "ought to be able to convince him that it is not so. He saw his father shortly before he died."

"Yes," Richard replied, "James Young died of a sudden attack of fever and, as it happens, he had a particularly clear skin always. The idea of heredity is pure delusion on Andrew's part, or it may be that he is merely seeking to justify himself and excuse his own moral weakness by stating that it is inherited and that therefore he is not to blame."

"I don't think that," David said. "He is genuinely convinced that it is useless for him to fight either the drink or the disease. He is simply terrified of them both and is absolutely certain of their power over him. What does seem strange," he continued, "is that with such real horrors as those ruining his life he should worry as he does about his money. Nana tells me that

he is like a man demented sometimes for fear someone or something should take every penny from him. Indeed I believe it is the fear of that which has driven him to drink."

"But," Miss Gray said, "the money is his absolutely. Naturally my brother looked into that before he allowed the engagement."

"Yes, of course, I know that. There is no more foundation for Young's terror lest he should lose his money than there is foundation for his belief that his weakness and sickness are inherited. But it is quite useless to argue with him. It only makes him suspicious, Lily tells me."

"The worst of it is," Miss Gray answered, "that he has complete control of the capital while he lives. Lily cannot touch it during his lifetime, though of course in the event of his death it would all be hers in trust for the child. Meanwhile it appears that Andrew, quite contrary to his usual habit of extreme caution, has ever since that first visit to the Continent periodically realized large sums which, as far as we know, he has never invested again. Lily only knew this lately. The lawyers felt bound to speak of it to her because Andrew, it appears, behaved very queerly when they advised him last month to think matters over before withdrawing an even larger sum than usual. We are convinced that there must be something at the back of all this that has not been discovered. A man like Andrew does not suddenly fall from an English gentleman into the miserable creature now living at The Craggs. Perhaps, David," she added, "he will tell you about that week on the Continent."

"I remember," David replied, "that he always had

an extraordinary belief in the power of heredity. He spoke of it to me that time I went abroad with him before his marriage. He appeared to me to be a fatalist in that respect."

Miss Gray thought deeply for a moment and then replied: "It is clear to me that either, as my brother suggests, he is merely pretending that he believes himself to be afflicted with a hereditary curse in order to explain his weakness, or something of moment occurred during that short visit to the Continent of which none of us know anything. Perhaps," she said again, "you may be able to find out and so be able really to help him. There is not much time to lose. The disease upon his face seems to have brought with it a great shock to his whole system, and Lily has refused to see him any more except just once to say good-by. You will travel part of the way to London with him to-morrow; perhaps he will give you his confidence."

CHAPTER XXVIII

VICTIM . . . YET RESPONSIBLE

LILIAN YOUNG stood alone in the Rectory garden and watched from the grass terrace the open road that curved away to the east, the road upon which the pedestrian must travel when taking a short cut from The Craggs to the station. She knew that David Kelman was with her husband there upon the hillside among the mountain-ash. She had seen them a moment ago, but while still so far away she could not distinguish the one from the other. In five minutes they would have crossed the bridge and would be upon that wide highroad close below her to the right, and a minute later Andrew would be here beside her bidding her farewell, for he was to travel abroad for a year. Lily knew she could not bear to look upon him. She knew his close proximity was repugnant to her. But David would be with him; David would not let him come too near to her; David would not let him touch her hand.

“Lily!”

Ah! Already then they must have crossed the bridge, for though Andrew’s voice was low yet she heard his every word. He must be there quite close beside her and . . . alone.

“Lily, I have come to say good-by . . . Lily, you know, I mean . . .”

Oh! Lily could not let him say those same soft

words that he had said so many times before. She would not listen to vows so feeble and so false as were the vows of Andrew Young. Yet she would have helped him even now, but . . . could not lift her eyes, for she would not let him see the fear that filled them.

"Lily, won't you even look at me?" For a moment Andrew stood in silence by her side and felt her hand grow cold within his own, while her head bent lower on her breast as she shrank beneath his touch. Then knowing quite clearly what he did, knowing quite distinctly why he did it, he turned and leapt the narrow hedge upon his left and quickly placed a belt of brush and fir between herself and him.

Later David found him there upon his face and heard the dry sobs shake his form, for men like women must sometimes weep when the brain is overwrought, when the heart is filled with a futile longing and can hold, it seems, no more.

And what of Andrew Young, poor victim of a world's mistake? What of the deadly fear which possessed him night and day and never left him, save he was too stupid to think at all? It was old Nana who had first found him out, and tried to aid him a second time.

"I cannot help it," he cried, "I hate it all the time. It is hereditary. My father and his uncle did the same and his father before him, for all I know. It is a curse with us; they told me so, and never misses a generation. I would help it if I could. I hate it all the time."

Nana had stood before the picture of his father while he spoke and marveled at his words. The face she looked upon was sweet and honest. It spoke also of refinement, and though it was molded in lines of

weakness rather than of strength it seemed to her impossible that James Young had even been a common drunkard. How unlike was this face to that of the young man seated moodily before the fire! No doubt Andrew Young drew the blackness of his hair and the deep brown of his eyes from the Spanish lady his father had married in those foreign parts. A pity both parents had died so young.

That was all that Nana knew of the man her dear Miss Lily had wedded. She, faithful soul, had been prejudiced against the marriage all the time and had asked no questions of anyone; thus she had heard only the current story of Andrew Young's parentage. In common with all the village folk Nana had always supposed that David Kelman only waited until the child Lily should be a woman grown to ask her to be his wife, and all loved David Kelman dearly, from the bent old man who broke the stones to the toddling children who watched to see him pass when he rode to meet the hounds. Nana had never understood all that had so quickly come to pass the summer that David and Miss Grand spent a month in Russia. Andrew Young had bought The Craggs two days after they left England and immediately so much had occurred that she had found herself at sea. The old woman now gazed at the picture of James Young and found she could not reconcile his son's deliberate accusation with the face she looked upon.

"Your father, sir, has a bonnie smile," she said. "That picture must have been taken before he went to foreign parts, or before the drink got hold of him."

"That!" Andrew Young sprang from his chair and clutched the carbon photo on the mantelshef.

"That!" he cried. "Why, you fool, that man's name was Young!" He tore the picture from its frame and held it, though with trembling fingers, over the candle that burnt upon his writing-table.

Nana said no more.

"What else should be the name of Andrew's father, if not Young?" she muttered to herself. "The master is more muddled than I thought. What name, for goodness' sake, should a father bear, save that to be borne in turn by his son?"

"The master will forget his own name soon," she said the words almost aloud, as she left the room and softly closed the door. "My dear Miss Lily! My poor lamb!" and old Nana's eyes were red for hours that winter evening, for she had loved Lily Young from the first moment of her birth; and now it seemed to her that she had nursed and nurtured her for years only to stand helpless by, because hopeless, in the hour of Lily's sore need. "I can do naught," she cried, as she ran a tiny tape through a white garment for the baby Joan. "I can do naught but watch the devil drag him down to hell and break my darling's heart the time."

And this deadly fear of alcohol that haunted the life of Andrew Young, as it haunts the lives of hundreds — aye, of thousands — every day, dragging men and women through the mire and dragging them deeper year by year? This deadly fear! Though all the time these men and women rage against its power, yet . . . they obey its slightest call. This fearful fear! Whence its presence, what its power, where born its most unholy flame? Who shall answer questions such as these? Not you nor I, whose mental plane

mayhap is one whereon vice in form so black and blatant can never even set its foot. Thus we cannot judge our brother to whom perhaps your sin and mine may seem as inexplicable as does his love or fear of alcohol to us. And even should we ask these fearful ones themselves what is the power that bends their will and saps their very being? Can they, if they would, answer lucidly? Does such a victim comprehend his captor's lawless rule? If he did, would he not rise and rend asunder the false fetters that bind him as the beast is bound within the confines of a merely carnal state? Save that perhaps it wrecks the home more quickly, is the inebriate's cowardice a greater evil than any other fear? What matter the precise identity of that which shows above the ground, when it is the rooted error underneath that prisons the soul of man in hell? What matter whether it be fear of drink or fear of death, fear of poverty, pestilence or pain, so long as man obeys its seeming power even though against his will? Shall not the world awake and systematically uproot the illegitimate whose name is simply . . . Fear, then cast it on the fire till it return to its native element, mere dust? Thus and thus alone shall each and every branch of this foul tree with its false detail or identity, be it what it may, die to live no more.

But no! The ages plead a childish plaint, "You ask too much. We cannot find the roots," they say, "those poison-roots of a bastard plant. Nor do we even see the trunk of this tree that you call Fear. The branches we are willing to cut down . . . they inconvenience us. Also they bear many names we do not like to see or hear; sin, for instance, sickness, sorrow, poverty, pain and death."

Ah, yes! The branches inconvenience mortal man; they grow so low, sometimes quite close about the feet made "part of iron, part of clay," but never higher than his pigmy height. Thus they trip him up or mayhap hit him in the face as he would hasten onward on the merry roundabout, which he so dearly loves and misnames life—a roundabout that whirls him back to where he started from and never lifts him higher than the dust. Yes, the branches inconvenience him, while the roots he does not even see. "Another day," he says, "will do for that." Yet, there they are, the devil's darlings, diving deeper, winding wider amid the earthly hopes and carnal cravings of a race called mortal man; and while they wind they weave, and while they riot they revel, clapping and crossing their hands, darkening the hearts of men and soiling the souls of women, tracing wherever they go the deadly trail of a fearful Fear. No stately tree of eternal growth is this, nor does a single branch reach heavenward, nor can the fowls of the air find any rest thereon! No tree of life is this, no leafage does it bear for medicine, no fruit for goodly food, but rather it is a foul counterfeit, to eat whereof is, first, disaster, later . . . death.

Yet, in reality, where is this tree, when all is said and done? Who planted it or authorized its growth. What is this fruit it purports to bring forth? A mongrel mixture in sooth, not of good and bad, but—so it would have the race believe—a mongrel knowledge of both. Yet such knowledge is wholly false, for like produces always like and no fount can send forth waters sometimes bitter, sometimes sweet. Who made of the merely allegorical . . . the actual?

Of the Tree of Life all may learn; all may know also what it is, where placed, and by Whose hand; may know too that it is by divine authority that it produces fruit which is good and good alone. Further, those who will may know a wondrous truth, that Love, ever-patient, perfect and profound, waits to enfold man in its warm embrace, *thus annihilating every fear.*

CHAPTER XXIX

A HOLY THING AND WONDERFUL

DAVID KELMAN sat back in his corner seat and idly watched the country from the train as he traveled swiftly back to London. He was thinking not of Andrew Young, but, as he often did, of Gabriel Grand, realizing something of all that he owed her and trying to comprehend the quality of her love for him. It was when he thought of that — of the love which she so freely shed upon his life ever since the day when he had opened his eyes to see her standing by his mother's side and looking upon him — that David's heart throbbed with a responsive gratitude. Why, he asked himself to-day, did Gabriel care for him so much? He knew well enough why he loved her, that was an inevitable thing. To him she stood as the personification of all that man or woman may most righteously love. She was to him to-day, as she had always been, mother, father, sister and friend. Ah! it was there that they met and stood side by side, and at last he understood a little of the wonderful tie that bound them. He was her friend and so . . . she loved him. She loved him, he suddenly understood, in a degree just as she had loved his father. No one in the world except himself would ever know how dearly Gabriel Grand had loved John Kelman. He knew this, partly by instinct but also because it was her habit to speak often to him

of John, and many times when she spoke, even though now he was a man, his eyes would grow hot and almost fill and his heart would wax rebellious that such love as Gabriel's for John and John's for Gabriel should have come to naught. Once when Miss Grand and he had rested for an hour upon a mountain slope in Wales and talked of his father he had voiced his sorrow at John Kelman's untimely death.

"Yes," Gabriel had replied, "death is cruel and wrong. I have long been convinced of that, but I also see that it need have no sting and that the grave may be robbed of its victory. Had my love for John been a matter of propinquity I think his death must have been mine as well, but it was not. Therefore death had no power to destroy our love; it still lives, because it was born of certain qualities of mind which are in their very nature enduring, indeed eternal. Right stood always at the helm of stern resolve with John, guiding his thought, thus molding his mind, and it was for his absolute integrity that I loved him."

"Yet you would have been content not to marry him," David had answered. It was here that he felt himself at sea, just here that he realized that this lasting love, which Gabriel and his father had won from each other, differed from that which men and women usually designate as love.

Gabriel had smiled, then answered gravely, "Our love was worthy of the name of friendship. Can that always be said by man or wife of the tie which binds them to each other? Our love," she had continued, "was love of the good, and as we discovered this good day by day, each in the life of the other, I think it throve and grew naturally as does a child when tended

in a kindly home and fed upon its normal food. Why should I have wished to marry John? Why should he have desired to marry me? We were always happy together, but we were also happy apart; we were constantly able to help each other, but also able to dwell alone. Often we solved a problem together, but also we had our individual work and understood that each unit should be a complete mentality independent and free, able to stand quite happily alone though ready always to help a brother when in need. At least John understood this, but I have had to learn much of it since he left me."

As David thought over this conversation he realized why he so often felt that Gabriel should have been a man. Her qualities of mind were such as one usually associates with the male. David thought he had never known anyone to be so self-reliant. He could not remember that she had ever in his experience asked advice of anyone. Because she was more clever than many and also very observant, she made fewer mistakes than most people. When she made a mistake it was, David considered, an education to watch her extricate herself. She lost no time in retracing her steps, if need be, however toilsome the way, and he had never known her make the same mistake twice. This self-reliance had naturally engendered a habit of independence, and Miss Grand seemed perfectly able to stand alone without the support of any male relation in a way which is unusual and which enabled her to do easily, and therefore gracefully, many things that even the emancipated woman of to-day cannot yet accomplish quite naturally alone. And yet how feminine she was! David thought no other woman's voice grew

so soft and tender toward those in trouble and he knew no other touch to compare with the touch of Gabriel's hand in sickness or in health. He remembered, he could never forget that hour years ago, when he had come home at the end of his first term from his public school. He had been feeling ill for days, but boy-like he had hung on till the last moment and said nothing, for he had no fancy for the sanatorium. He had longed for Gabriel, but had not breathed a word of his longing in the short scribble he had sent announcing his return for the holidays; and so by the time he reached home and she came down the terrace steps to meet him he had nearly reached the end of his tether.

"Why, David!" That much of surprise Miss Grand had expressed at sight of his white face and shaking limbs, but the next minute she had stooped and lifted him, big boy as he was, in her arms and carried him quickly up the terrace steps and through the open window and laid him on the couch in her sitting-room. Her superb strength was one of her greatest charms. It seemed as though she could not tire, and all through the long illness that followed David knew no other face and felt no touch of the hireling's hand, for she nursed him night and day, and when the doctor talked of infection all she said was, "I am not afraid." David Kelman still remembered the day when Gabriel carried him out into the garden and told the doctor he was now really convalescent.

The doctor had answered, "Yes," and then after a curious pause he had added, "Miss Grand, you have done this, nothing that I could have done could or would have saved him." When they were alone a minute later, David had asked her what the doctor meant

and she had smiled and said, "I think he did not analyze his own words. He simply meant that it was the nursing and not the medicine that had cured you." Yet even then, though such a boy, David had answered, "It was the love that did it." To-day he had found the name for that love which had watched over him whether present or absent, whether in silence or in speech, day after day and year after year. He had found the name, found it never to lose it. He would hold this love always in his heart and guard it quite consciously as a sacred thing and wonderful, for did it not bear for him the holy name of friendship?

He was to start for Germany the next day. It was an old promise made to Felix long ago, that he would spend a month in the Jägerthal, and Felix was to bear him company.

CHAPTER XXX

FIDELITY

So Dr. Kelman went to Germany. He must have this summer month at least all to himself. His heart was filled with the old unrest. Nowhere had he found safe anchorage for his thought, only and always a great confusion. He must be free, if only for a time, from the pressure and whirl of his London life, free to search the hours for what the years, overful perhaps of active toil, had so far failed to give him.

It was in the quiet of the very early morning that David Kelman again saw his father's faithful friend. The sun had risen in splendor high above the forest trees and shone upon the dew which still lay on the grass, though already bramble and bush were free from its moist touch. In the open, just where his father had rested for that last day and night, though David did not know it, sat the old retainer now.

Felix rose suddenly to his feet as David Kelman approached.

"My master!" he exclaimed and held forth both his hands.

"Your master's son," the young man answered gently.

David knew, for Gabriel had often told him, that every year he grew more like his father and less like the wayward mother whom he had resembled when

younger, but Felix, regarding him more closely, saw that he still retained much of the beauty that she had bequeathed to him.

The old man rested once more upon the dried fern which he heaped up every spring and burnt year after year before the autumn rains could turn its fragrance into foulness. Then David Kelman seated himself quietly by his side, and presently they spoke of John. It was long since Felix had done so and now it seemed that he would never cease. His old tongue ran away with him, he said. Nay, not that: he had thought so much of Mr. John and loved him all these years, and now his master lived again and talked with him through the deep tones of his son's voice, while the same eyes looked down on him through David's direct and steadfast glance. Ah! it was good to sit and talk here, where his master had lain that last day and night — here, where Felix had waited and watched for years.

So they met day after day, sheltering together among the pines from the summer showers and rejoicing together when baptized by the summer sun. David found in the long monologues of his father's friend just the rest his storm-ridden soul desired. Not an impure word left the old man's lips. Not one coarse sentiment did he utter. His life had been spent always and almost alone in the Jägerthal and nearly all he knew of life he had learnt from John. Now he spoke to David of his father as even Gabriel had never done, and as the days went by the young man's eyes were often soft with unshed tears, for he had never known a love like this — a love that had served and always had loved to serve, never asking for return; a love that always had admired, never in spite of itself, but without re-

serve and because it recognized the admirable and loved to pay a perpetual tribute thereto; a love which, being born of love for the good alone, would live, as Felix himself would live, through all eternity; a love, sweet as is humility, enduring as is good itself.

As he listened David Kelman asked himself many questions, and in the quiet of those summer days sought persistently, as he had sought for years, the answer to the question which had so deeply stirred his soul ever since that night upon a Highland moor when he had searched for and found a little child. This thing called love, what is its nature in very truth, and whence its origin? He had held that child sobbing to his heart, then dried her tears as best he could, then hushed her to a gentle sleep till the daylight made it possible for him to take her back to Gabriel Grand, and he had loved that child for years and thereby suffered hourly. Dimly, as he listened and Felix talked, he understood that love is love always and that just as Felix still rejoiced in his devotion to John Kelman so, if he himself could but find the way, he might one day rejoice in his love for Lily Young. But how find the way? The search had been so long; his heart had sorrowed for so many years; almost he had sinned the sin unspeakable!

The two were seated side by side and the day was decked in the fullness of its glory when David Kelman bade good-by to Felix.

"I have," the old man said, "a little longer before you leave the Jägerthal in which to talk to you of Mr. John and I have kept the best until the last. See here!" and he took from his breast a gold-leaved volume bound in sober black. "The hour they made me

lift my master and carry him up yonder to the banquet hall, I laid my gun upon the fern couch that I had built for him, and it and I together mounted guard upon this spot until the autumn rains were like to come. Then with my gun I fired the master's bed for I would take nothing from it nor add aught to it, nay, not even to kindle the flame. Then suddenly in the midst of that quick fire I saw a great fern curl and coil, then instantly go out, and there in the heart of that swift destruction I saw this little book. The edge of its leaves is charred, you see, but never a word is defaced. Many times, though I cannot read the English letters very well, I have turned each page and every word is clear as is the day that shines around us now. I knew the master had this book upon his breast the hour that he died, but when they bade me carry him back my eyes were dim and my heart more full than it had ever been before, for I had begged that they would let me watch beside him for that night at least, here, alone under the open sky. I knew nothing of the little book save that I fetched it from the post the day he was taken ill and saw him break the seal and smile as he slowly turned the leaves, forgetful of my presence as he sometimes would be. He read the same page many times and then I heard him whisper once and once again. 'Dear God, I thank Thee, I thank Thee! This is the Truth which Thou hast given me.' An hour later the God of heaven sent His angel to sound the bugle-call and bid my master come on high and receive his reward," and the old man pointed to the blue dome above his head nor moved his eyes till some moments had passed. The shimmering light was none too strong

for his steadfast gaze and his heart held only a single hope, which he knew quite certainly would one day be fulfilled.

"David Kelman!" The old man's voice was like the voice of a murmuring brook that grows with its growth as it rises and swells; "I watched by my master from babe to boy and from boy to full-grown man and I never once heard him whisper a lie nor knew him act meanly to bird, beast or man. I saw him quiver and quail when first faced by a city's foul sin, then . . . rise to the battle and fight a great fight, the braver because of that fear overcome. What more, David Kelman, can any man do than live as a good man should live? What think you was death to my master, sir? 'Twas nought but a bugle-call. 'Twas only the quick reveillé."

Late summer was with them and Felix's gaze was keen and his voice as strong as it ever had been, when David bade him a gentle farewell, nor was either shamed by the tears that gathered, if but for a moment, in the old man's eyes.

What wonder if David's voice was deeper to-day as he bent and kissed his father's friend? Had not Felix taught him the lesson of life as none had been able to teach it before?

Thus David's love for Felix lives as lives the love of Felix for John, for now it is true as it always has been and ever must be true: like begets like and love begets love, while the truth of love is all of love and the all of love is Immortality.

So Felix's love for John still lives and will, as age mounts up to æon and merges into that eternity wherein

man finds again his brother-man and knows aright his brother and himself, for he has learnt that man is not, and never was, corporeal, because he is, and ever was, divinely individual.

CHAPTER XXXI

PERFECT PRIEST AND PERFECT LAYMAN

It was not many days after David had left the Jägerthal and the sun's rays were hot on the pines when Gabriel Grand stood alone by the forester's hut where Felix had left her an hour before. To her also the old man had spoken of John, yet had told her nothing of the lesson of life which David had lately learnt. Instead, Felix listened while Gabriel read from the book that had brought sweet hope to his master's heart. Together they searched the gold-edged pages and talked of John's love for man. For the rest, Felix received the Word of Life in a heart made ready by faithful love; received it straight from the Mind of God, which waits to bestow all good on the one who listens to learn, who heeds as he hears. Thus it was there, high up in the heart of the Vosges, that Gabriel spoke face to face with the God of Love as speaketh a man to his friend. Was her long search ended, or had she but reached a resting-place where she might wait a while for a further unfoldment of that for which she had searched so long? Might she now search as one who feels quite certain of a swift reward?

Standing there by the woodman's hut, where the forest was open and clear, the grass underfoot was bathed in bright light while the wide sky above wore its robe of rich blue.

Gabriel flung from her feet the soiled shoes of the past and bound there instead the gospel of peace. She, whom her world had called agnostic, and truly so, for until to-day she had not known, now bowed before the infinite presence and person of Good and knew even Jesus of Nazareth no longer after the flesh; for to-day, to her newly awakened thought had come some understanding of "the resurrection and the life" and now she beheld, as never before, the eternal Christ who was and is "an high priest forever after the order of Melchisedec."

Soon she would return to England: David was already there. What had the long days spent by Felix's side brought to the son of Phyllis and of John? Gabriel did not know, and she would not ask a single question of that hour, but would wait till David himself should speak of it.

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Dr. Kelman was in his room when Miss Grand reached their city home. He stood before her now, his face aglow, his voice filled full of eager joy as he greeted her.

"Gabriel," he said, "I am glad you have returned. You remember I often told you, and always you said I must be right, though Broadhurst would not have it so, that there is a better way than the lethal chamber, a better way than death. Gabriel, I have found that better way."

Gabriel Grand held her peace and prayed a silent prayer. Was David's way the one she too had found — that great highway of holiness and health? If not, then they must love each other as never before, till she might lead him to the gateway of this New Jeru-

salem, this city made of holy citizenship whose King is always Love.

"Gabriel, you spoke to me once long ago of a new philosophy, of which my father learnt a little while before he died."

"Yes," she answered softly, then waited again while David's eagerness was stilled by the sudden hush in her voice.

"That new philosophy," he said, "I know it now, is the way of life, the better way, the way of holiness, the way of health; never, never, the way of death."

"Its name?" she asked, and now the world for her was filled with silence and it seemed that she had waited thus for years.

"Its name?" he said. "Oh, Gabriel! It has many names. 'Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Prince of Peace.'"

"Its name to-day?" she asked, and now her voice was deep, even a little stern. Then once more she waited while the world for her lay still as the blue of the sky or the calm of a motionless sea.

"To-day," David answered softly, "to-day, its name is — Christian Science."

"Dear!" That was all that Gabriel said, but she crossed the room, then lifted her hand and rested it on his head, almost her only method of caress.

"This new philosophy," she said a moment later, "is still the old. Already for you and me the prophet's words are true, 'I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me forever, for the good of them, and of their children after them.'"

"Their children," David Kelman said, and paused. "Yes, for the heart of the man or woman who awakes

to recognize the good embraces the wide world and longs to shelter each and all from harm."

That evening they talked again of the subject they had both so lately learnt to love.

"I am sure that many are looking for this light and longing for a more substantial life," Gabriel said. "Richard Gray sent me this to-day." And she read aloud from a printed paper in her hand. "See, this is what Carlyle wrote many years ago."

"Richard told me," David answered, "that he was quite sure Carlyle was right; the priest and doctor should be one. He showed me that extract yesterday."

"We see now," Gabriel replied, "that if a man would do the Master's work in the manner of the Master's doing they must be one, for he was perfect priest and perfect layman all the time. As things are, too often, the priest goes out when the doctor is called in. For should he think it unwise, the patient does not go to Church, nor even read at home, though at the later hopeless stage the Churchman waits beside the dying bed. There is but little unity between the two, no understanding of spiritual coöperation."

"Yet spiritual coöperation is the demonstration of the Christ. If only all could see how practical is this teaching and how divine! I spoke of this to Richard yesterday and for a moment we talked of the Nazarene, and as we dwelt upon the life and death of Jesus we saw that he understood coöperation as no one else has ever done. Think for a moment of the perfect system of that life and you know at once that the head of Jesus could not plan that which the hand of Jesus would not execute. You know instinctively that he never could have taught that the Father built up with one hand that

which He pulled down with the other. Yet this is what the world attributes to the hand of God — with one hand to give, with the other to take away, whether the gift be love or joy, health or wealth, it is all the same to that which men call orthodoxy. Yet Jesus never taught nor acted thus, but consistently from first to last he preached and practiced a glorious harmony — like producing like, one cause and one effect, the ultimate of perfect good."

When David spoke again, it was a little wistfully that he said, "You and I, my friend of all these years, we need each other still."

He rested his hand, though only for a moment, in Gabriel's and felt hers close upon it, while her steadfast eyes grew soft.

"Man always needs his brother's love," she said, "and often needs this love to help him onward up life's rugged path. So, David, you and I are friends as we always have been. Two are better than one, for when one falls the other holds him up."

"Dear," David answered, with a little wonder in his tone, "is it possible that such an one as I can aid a woman such as you?"

"Yes," said Gabriel softly, "for, in the infinite design, thus does the glory of the Christ unfold till one day we shall see universal man in the endless harmony of Mind, and this day comes as man coöperates with man, while men and women, waking from the dream, rise above the flesh and look into each other's eyes yet never are afraid. For spiritual coöperation is the Christ . . . 'And of his fullness have we all received.' Did each but know there is enough for all, brother would more eagerly share with brother and thus

demonstrate the infinite wealth of the divine Mind, the riches of the glory of the Christ."

"Did each but know," David answered gravely, "that there is one Father only, the hater would know himself to be a fratricide and would learn to loathe a crime so base."

CHAPTER XXXII

"FAITHFUL IS HE THAT CALLETH YOU"

DURING the days which followed David Kelman and Miss Grand talked of many things, for they knew that he stood at the parting of the ways and must make that final choice—final, that is, just there—whether for good or evil, whether for life or death.

"You will not wonder, Gabriel, that this should mean a war for me. I have loved my patients and none of them will come with me. So I must leave them where they are, and that is harder perhaps than you can guess, because they suffer sometimes day and night."

"They cannot come with you," Miss Grand replied, "unless they understand the way, and they cannot understand the way unless they long to leave the old landmarks and are ready to brace themselves and fight for better things."

"The majority," David answered, "do not care to leave the beaten track except when they find it fraught with physical pain; they do not long for anything save for merely creature comforts, so-called peace. Yet it is hard to leave one's brother wasting his substance there among the husks."

"A practical philosophy," Gabriel replied, "has, I feel sure, a field in which the willing worker may both sow and reap. As yet, we know so little of this great truth; soon you will be free, and when we are more

fitted for it we surely shall find wonderful work somewhere to do."

So Dr. Kelman sought his freedom and met for the first time in his life the world's cold frown. But that mattered very little to one whose mind was quite made up.

The worldly woman scoffed, then scolded him. "What! Will you, with Mayfair at your feet and the favor of princes and kings as well, cast all to the winds for a foolish fad? Your place is here. There is no other man who has your knowledge or your gifts. I want your help when my head is bad and I am worn out. No other doctor is half so good. Will you pass me on to an average man and all for a foolish fad?"

The querulous cry of a greedy heart, the moan of a selfish fear, had no power to alter David's resolve, but the sufferers' arms held out in despair made him pause on the threshold and sigh.

"Doctor," a sick woman cried, "don't leave me to die. I live for your visit each day and the pain cannot last much longer now."

"I believe," he replied, "that it need not be. I am sure that the pain can be cured."

But he spoke to deaf ears; the thing of which he told her was too good, she said, to be true.

The hardest was yet to come. The little ones clustered about his knee and each showed the big doctor his toy, sure of a smile from those kindly eyes, certain of love's most tender touch.

Dr. Kelman's voice grew soft and held a wistful tone, for here he had dared to hope he might be heard.

"Good-by, my lad. I sha'n't see you again. I am

going," he said, "to look for a better way to make little children get quickly well."

The child's eyes filled with sudden tears and the young cheeks flushed with a wave of fear. "Doctor, dear doctor, come back and tell me, come back and tell me the way."

But when David went back the door was close barred with civility's smile and coldest courtesy, while upstairs a little lad asked for his friend, but always asked in vain.

Two there were whom David Kelman thought would surely still stand by his side, but no. . . .

"Kelman!" his friend had never spoken so coldly before. "I think you must be mad. You know your name will be in the New Year's list. Of course that is no news to you. Will you throw success away when the world lies at your feet?"

"Broadhurst, it was you who first spoke of this truth to me. I find in it that better way, for which I have searched so long. The rabbit-warrens need hatch no more that feeble foulness which sickens and kills, if you and I and others will but follow where this leads."

"Bah! man, you talk like a silly fool."

So David held his friend's hand in a silent farewell and knew that his life henceforth was a blank, as far as the world could make it so. What matter so long as he kept to that better way.

A once grateful mother with a smile of passing pity handed a letter to the reigning king. "My son, your life he saved; his own he would ruin, it seems. Poor man, he was quite too good for that!"

But the young king pondered for many a day the

deep things of God in his heart. He read the book that David Kelman sent, then wrote a kindly letter to his friend.

Now he opens wide the Book of Books and slowly turns its page as the searcher seeks and listens the while for a voice to direct his search, till he could turn the leaf no more, but must rest for long on the word of John.

The words ring out as he reads them aloud, yet he adds through quivering lips, "This truth is indeed a mighty truth, and . . . too high a truth for me."

The young king paces the length of his room while night gives place to early day. Now he kneels at the open casement and lifts up his heart to God, while into his eyes a new-born tenderness comes, for he watches a city asleep.

Why does he weep as he gazes thereon?

Is it indeed as the angels weep when they watch the nations of earth? Then shall he rejoice as the angels rejoice when they stand around the throne. Does he too see in part as the Revelator saw? Does he too wait as those must wait whose sight is long, whose vision grows steadfast and clear?

Neither question nor answer is thine or mine, both are safe in the bosom of God.

And David Kelman? "What matter?" he had said, so long as he kept to that better way? But David, this way that you have chosen is uphill all the time and leads to wondrous heights. The air is purer than many yet care to breathe, while the light is clearer than many yet care to face. See to it, David, that you

neither falter nor fail when you leave the valley and begin the climb!

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The world around him slept when David Kelman faced the fullest fierceness of the fight. "Nay, not that," he cried; "leave me the past. The present and the future, all are Thine. Leave me the past. I have loved her so from boy to man and all these years besides. Leave me the past. I will not soil it with a single thought that should not be . . . but it is mine. I cannot part with that. Leave me the past."

"My son, give Me thine heart."

.

The world around him slept again, while David wrestled for the past and prayed for that at least. "Dear God, I long to live for Thee and Thine, but leave me Lily as she used to be — a little child whom any man might surely love. Leave me that distant past at least. It never was other than white as snow. Leave me that past at least."

"My son, give Me thine heart."

.

The world around him slept again and David's face was white and still, while his eyes were wide with pain. He moaned as a mother may moan when her all has been wrenched away. "What more," he cried, "can any man do than that, dear God, Thou hast asked of me? I have cut off my hand. I have plucked out my eye. What more, dear God, can any man do? I have parted from even that fairest past. I have laid at Thy feet even Lily the child."

Arise, David Kelman, arise and eat, for "the jour-

ney is to great for thee." Why despair, why despond? Hear, David, hear and heed the voice from the ages, saying to thee as it said to the prophet of yore, "What doest thou here, Elijah? . . . go, return on thy way to the wilderness." . . . David, the Lord hath need of thee.

Return into the wilderness? Aye, and what do there? So David asked himself. For whom should he search in this wild wilderness, the world? For the sinning, the sick, the dying, the dead? Yea, verily, David Kelman, thou hast still a harder thing to do.

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The world around him slept once more, while to David Kelman came that hour which comes to each and all, when a man stands face to face with that which has been, and rises from the ashes of the past towards that which he desires to become.

"Nay, not that!" he cried. "I am no modern Cain. I am not my brother's keeper. Only for a moment did I ever wish him ill. Ask any other thing of me than that . . . but do not send me to search for Andrew Young."

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Thus David wrestled; thus David knelt and prayed.

But for what did he listen now? The cry of the night was not new to him. That hansom had passed his window before. Why heed what happened out there in the dark? For what did he listen? What was it that called him and told him to rise? Ah! The window was wide and the night air cool. The heavens wept, as a woman may weep silently and against her will. That hansom was passing again. Well, what

of that? The hour was dark and the man could not find the house he sought!

"Sir," the cabman saw a gleam of white linen where the street-lamp pierced the darkness and rested on David's dinner dress, "I want Dr. Kelman's house. My fare can't tell me the number at all."

"I will come."

Was it David who spoke, the man whom we know had wrestled all night? One swift pressure upon the wall and his room was flooded with light; another, the landing outside was bathed in it too; one more, the hall and the porch were bright as day. There David Kelman stood for a moment and paused, while he thought of a word spoken long ages ago by a Hebrew, heart overflowing with love for mankind. "Faithful is He that calleth you, who also will do it."

Aye, this was the mighty truth he had learned that night — of himself he had not a baby's strength; from on high he had the strength of his God. Yet the order had come so swiftly that David paused on the threshold of his house, while steadfast purpose took form in resolve.

His figure became upright as that of one who braces himself, and his mouth became as that of one prepared to speak the Word, while in his eyes there shone the light of the highest desire that can enter the heart of mortal man. He held his breath for a moment of time; then bowed his head and silently drank from the fount of that Love which is Life.

Well he knew what awaited him. Full well he knew the voice that called from beneath the tree, just there in front of his house.

"Kelman, the terrors of death encompass me. You helped me once before."

"Aye, man, yet not I. Neither then nor now."

Thus came to David that hour of reckoning which comes in time to each and all. Thus he began to unwind the snarls of the past and mounted a height he had not reached before. To Andrew Young came this hour too, and with it came a holy thing, which ever lives as white as snow — the friendship of a man whose heart is pure.

CHAPTER XXXIII

"THE WILDERNESS OF DAMASCUS"

It was two years since Lily had said good-by to her husband in the Rectory garden at Inkervale. From that day to this she had not seen him and knew nothing of his life, save that, one night a few months before, he had called on Dr. Kelman. He never wrote to her and she had no wish to hear from him. A week ago she had received startling news, and now knew that she had no right to the name of Young, for Andrew was, it appeared, the son not of James Young but of George Gordon. Worse still, her husband had known this even before he married her. No madness had prompted that terror of monetary loss. He had known himself to be Gordon's son, the penniless child of a debauchee; a changeling victim, it is true; a helpless infant at the first; mere plaything, so it seemed, of a woman's angry will. Yet the wrong, which she was informed the Creole's revenge had brought about, Andrew might in a measure have undone, the instant he heard the truth. Neither name nor property was his, yet year after year he had kept them both, in order, he said, to give her and baby Joan a home. A home built on a lie and nourished by a lie should be no home for her or hers. So Lily Gordon cursed herself and him while she recoiled from the thought of Andrew, not only as

she last had known him, but also from the recollection of the married life which she had spent with him. It became intolerable to her to think of the years by her husband's side during which he, self-deceived, had in turn descended to deceit. That she had never loved him she understood at last. Love is no temporal happening, no varying condition, here to-day and gone to-morrow. Because she did not now love him, she understood that she never had loved him at all. What then was the attraction which had drawn them together, so that she had placed, when a mere child, her whole life in his hands? Lily did not know, but she was wounded through and through and hot with shame, for she felt that she had lost a status that every woman should maintain in its integrity.

"Surely," she wailed aloud in the silence of the night, "no word is so misused as that of love, no word is so befouled. Yet somewhere it must exist and . . . as a holy thing."

Then she turned upon her pillow and wept above the head of Joan. Would she grow up already cursed? Would she grow up to lie and rob and cheat, to drink and die? What was it she herself had learnt when scarcely older than Joan—"the sins of the fathers?" How then forgive the father who had cursed with such a curse as this his unborn child? How forgive George Gordon or George Gordon's son?

To-day she breasted the hills which embosomed The Craggs and bade the little Joan go search with Nana for the wild harebell, while she rested upon the rocks. Here she was looking down upon the house where she had lived with Andrew, high above the village of Inkervale. No other human habitation was visible

from where she sat and she was glad to be so much alone.

What did it matter that Andrew had now confessed his crime? What did it avail her that he was ready to restore the estate of the late James Young to its rightful owner, wherever he might be? David, it seemed, had told him that he must do this. Well, that was right, of course, but how find the Creole or the man whom she had taken away from Cin when a babe? How give back to Andrew's wife the past, how free it of its foulness?

Above her head was a sky of palest blue holding to its heart sun-flecked clouds all made of light. In front of her lay a far horizon of low heights all purple-clad, and more distant still were mountains of uncertain gray embosomed in an opal haze which lost itself in the vaulted blue; at her feet a near foreground of gray-green hills and many-shaded firs, which sentineled the quiet lake.

Slowly there came to Lily's sense a seeming peace, till suddenly without a note of warning a giant flame rose in the west and sky and earth and water were all on fire now.

The air was filled with molten light that chased the azure quite away and stilled Lily's thought with sudden fear. This flaming earth and heaven in one, and she, it seemed, a wandering soul alone amid the burning beauty of a world about to be consumed. She bent her head and searched her secret heart, then trembled at a sudden knowledge that was hers. . . . That peace that she had looked upon and loved a moment since, where was it now? The erstwhile calm of that great dome above her head, the quiet of the lake beneath her

feet, whither had they fled? How like the life which she had led by Andrew's side—a life quite full of seeming brightness, quite full of seeming peace, till suddenly quenched by a passionate pain. How like her life for years—a life that had ended in one hour, when she had stood face to face with Andrew's sin—an hour before which her fancied joy had fled as suddenly as the peace of this calm evening before the flaming sky that now dyed earth and water red as blood.

She lifted her eyes, then rose to her feet: for lo! the world was now held in the gentle embrace of a tenderer light, which had chased the sanguinary flame away and now bathed the bracken beneath her feet with a purer gold and a greater glory than heretofore. The tall ferns bent over the lake, framing it on every side. Below . . .

Who was this that mounted the slope and called her name aloud? David Kelman it surely must be and yet . . . was it David after all? He had always bounded over the rocks; he had always been wonderfully free from care, and his voice like the voice of no one else. But to-day he was surely strong with an added strength.

Yes, David stood there before her, with hands held out and the smile of a little child on his face.

"Lily," he said, "I have come for you. I have come to take you home, my dear."

What was it that made his mouth so firm? What was it that deepened the depth of his eyes? Why did she hear the sound as of moving waters in his voice? "Lily," he said, "come home with me. Andrew is waiting for you. Come back to your husband, dear."

"David, you may not ask me to do that. He does not exist for me."

Unbroken was the calm of that still evening while David Kelman answered her. "Listen, Lily. Rest here and look around. The glow of the evening will speak to you of heaven reflected by earth. This hour is full of a lesson for me. As I watched that fiery flame and saw it followed by this clear light, I received a message for you and I must deliver it now. It came to me once before through a night of pain and yet . . . it was born of peace. God, Lily, was not in the fire, but after the fire there came a still small voice, the message from God which sooner or later comes to us all. There were lessons the prophet still had to learn, and work still waiting for him to do in the wilderness of Damascus.

"The wilderness of Damascus?" Lily turned and looked at David Kelman standing there by her side, and she started afresh at the words he said. "All there is of life is a desert," she moaned. "Call it Damascus if you will; what matter the name? The pain of despair is the same always."

David rose and left her. He knew she had that to bear which she must bear alone. Later he would come again and take her home to Andrew.

"Must I indeed go back to such a wilderness as that?" Lily moaned aloud in her agony as the sun sank slowly down behind the distant hills. "How search for aid for him? How point him to the Horeb-height, when I know not the way myself? Must I indeed do that! Nay, God of mercy and of love, ask of me any other thing than that."

Yet, Lily, that which David Kelman could do for Andrew, you surely likewise can perform. Was not his perhaps the harder part and always, Lily, "the battle is not yours, but God's."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

LOLA AND HER CHILD

A YEAR and a month had come and gone.

Joan sat upon a tiny hillock and filled her frock with great kingcups and soft white cockoo-flowers.

"Mother!" she called and held her treasures high.

Lily smiled and waved a kiss from both her hands, while she read and read again from a little book wide open to her view. Joan arose and held her golden glory higher.

"Mother," she said, "the world is full of flowers to-day."

Lily too arose and stood by her husband's side. A rush of blinding tears fell like a summer shower from her eyes, while surely something lived within her heart that had never breathed before. A throbbing thought possessed her soul till she knew nothing save only this, that Joan's whole life was safe from harm.

"Joan," she cried, and the wee woman nestled there upon her breast, while she closed her arms quite over her and held them all about her baby girl. Joan's bright eyes grew wide with wonder that mother should weep to-day and let such big tears fall upon her up-turned face.

"Sweetheart." Lily's voice was new to baby Joan. It seemed so full, so deep and yet so kind. "Sweet-

heart, thank God with me a hundred thousand times for Christian Science."

"Thank God." The baby tones were soft yet strong; the baby voice was sweet and clear. "Thank God," she said, "a hundred thousand times . . . for Daddy has come home."

How precise the utterance of little lips unused to words so large as these! Then suddenly the young child bounded from the woman's warm embrace and chased a gleaming dragon-fly across the flowering field and far beyond the wild-rose hedge.

Lily's husband heard and saw it all and knew just why that summer shower fell upon the great kingcups that lay now in her lap.

"Dear heart," he whispered, yet loud enough for her to hear, "you have forgiven me at last, for now you know you need no longer fear for Joan, and" He could say no more. He could only kneel upon the meadow by her side, just there where the giant elms were cheek by jowl and screened them from the passing gaze of man.

Now Lily's sobs were like to shake her form from head to foot, but Andrew held her closer to his heart and kissed her tears away. What if his lips were over-white, what if a shadow rested in his eyes? It sometimes takes the tears of two to wash away the past.

Later he spoke again. "Dear heart," he whispered, "our Joan can never suffer for her father's sin, for we are learning to love God well and we have but to teach her of His law. The promise of the ages still holds good and we will prove it to be true. 'I will show mercy unto thousands of them that love Me and keep

My commandments.' This it is that we must do, love Him and obey."

They had left the new-mown hay behind them as they talked and now together they paced the avenue of rhododendrons that Lily had always loved so well.

"I heard from my father to-day," and Andrew drew an unopened letter from his pocket as he spoke. "You know that he asked for Christian Science treatment six months ago. Thank God he too will be free. David writes that already no one would recognize him, for his skin is becoming so clear and his character strengthens every day. My father's letter is a long one. I have not opened it yet. It was enclosed in one from David who tells me that he wishes me to hear what he has to say and then, if I will, I am to write to him in answer to this. David will be here by tea-time to-day. He writes that the terror of hereditary ill is fast leaving my father's life and he sees now that his sickness and sin were engendered by fear — conscious fear from the age of six, unconscious fear from the day of his birth. Directly he understood that this was behind all the trouble, he fought against it and soon he will know something of the love that casteth out all fear; and then, but not till then, he will be healed, thus proving that 'the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus' makes man 'free from the law of sin and death.' Justice reigns to-day, Lily, as it did yesterday, and the prophet's words are simple truth: 'the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.

But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live. Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God: and not that he should return from his ways, and live.' ”

They stood together on the lawn now and Lily plucked and held a chestnut bloom. Noting the beauty of each petal, she understood the import of its perfectness in its relation to the structure of the whole. So must it be with life, she thought, goodness must be individual, yet universal too; and she was glad indeed that George Gordon's life was growing strong and calm and pure. But there was David crossing the croquet ground. What was it he had to tell? Andrew was standing there beside him now, holding his hand in his, while his clear face flushed and his eyes grew bright with sudden happiness.

“Lily,” he cried, “do you hear what David says? I am not George Gordon's son. We need not leave our home. Joan need not lead a life cooped up in that wretched little town where I meant to work for her and you. David has seen the half-caste Trott, who, finding that Gordon had spoken out, saw that the game was up, that the goose would lay no more golden eggs for him. He lost his head and told David in a rage that he had known all along that I am the son, not of Gordon, but of Young. Then, a week ago his office-boy, one Sam, whom he had systematically ill-used for years, and for whom, it appears, Gordon had quietly sent out to Cin,

brought certain proof that he and two of the carriers had watched my mother make an attempt to lift me from the stretcher while Gordon slept, but that he woke just as she dropped a blossom on my face that had rested in the mouth of the baby she carried in her arms. That blossom was never meant for me but she could not even stop to brush it off, for Joseph Trott awoke at that minute and she dared not face him there with all the carriers at his back."

Andrew spoke so eagerly that Lily could scarcely follow all he said, but David sat now by her side and told her that he had just seen Richard Gray and heard from him that the day before he left the island of Cin he had spoken to James Young's widow. She had then told him a tale which precisely agreed with Sam's account of her attempt to regain possession of her son, but she could give him no proof at all to act upon, so he could not attempt to restore her child, nor could he then find any trace of Trott, for Sam, who might have informed him fully, was at the time dumb as the dead. Richard left the next night on the *Crocodile*, and only saw Gordon when eight days had passed. He was still quite helpless to act and uncertain of the mother's tale, for what proof had he that she spoke the truth? A year later he heard that Lola and the baby she mothered had completely disappeared, and he was never able to trace their whereabouts. "Naturally, when Andrew wanted to marry you," and David turned to Lily, "Richard took great care to interview the lawyers himself, but he had absolutely nothing that he could lay before them, so could not even mention his doubts."

As they talked the matter over, Mr. Gray, walked

up the drive and joined them. "I have just remembered," he said, as he seated himself by David's side, "something which would perhaps help us to clear up the matter very quickly. It is only a chance, it is true, but if I could but find a photo, merely a snapshot, which I took of Lola with both the children in her arms, it might help us. I have often fancied," he turned to Andrew as he spoke, "that you resembled her. It may be only my imagination, but a likeness often comes out strongly in an untouched photograph."

Andrew did not answer. It meant very much to him, this possibility of which Richard Gray now spoke for the first time.

"Where is the photo, Uncle Richard?" Lily's voice was unlike her own and it shook a little.

"My dear, I searched and searched for it when Andrew wanted to marry you, but I could not find it. I had it on board the *Crocodile*, for I remember that I showed it among many others to George Gordon and the Frenchwoman in whose care he had placed Andrew during the voyage, but I cannot remember ever seeing it since."

David Kelman became very thoughtful for a moment. "Andrew," he said suddenly, "have you opened Gordon's letter yet? I have not had time to talk to you about him, but open that letter now. He said it contained something of importance, and made me register mine when I enclosed his in it."

But Andrew had already broken the fragile seal and with fingers that trembled he withdrew from the thin envelope a small piece of white paper neatly folded.

Lily was on her knees beside him now. "Andrew," she cried, but could say no more, for she held in her

hand a faded picture and looked with startled eyes from it to her husband and back again. The same dark eyes and drooping lids, the same straight and abundant hair low upon the temples, the same finely chiseled features. Could any doubt that here upon the faded paper was depicted the mother, while there by Lily's side stood the son?

David Kelman stayed that night at The Craggs, and after dinner the three talked long and earnestly, for Andrew saw as never before that he had indeed run when none pursued.

Brought up by the Egauts to reverence as law the belief in the curse of heredity, convinced by Trott and Gordon that he was the latter's son, accepting as truth the false proof produced, he fell into the snare at once, a victim to fear — a fear engendered in part by all he had learnt in his childhood and youth.

He marveled now that he should have shown himself such a poor creature; he marveled that he should have accepted without question the documents which Trott put before him; but the thought that he might lose Lily and the horror of the whole interview had come suddenly upon him and found him quite defenseless. Christian Science had healed him of his fears, for it was teaching him to worship a God of Love, whose will is the only law, and bringing to his view man in his true reality, co-heir with Christ and inheritor of harmony.

Yet as time passed Andrew Young was not altogether happy. He could not forgive George Gordon for those years of suffering; he could not forget the lie that had so shocked and terrified him as to make of him less than a man.

Moreover, he felt deeply wounded when he thought of his past, for he knew that he had at times only half believed Trott's story. He knew that he had at times deliberately excused his own weakness by declaring to himself that he could not help it. Often the thought had come to him that he should at all hazards investigate the matter, that no other honest course lay before him; but the mere possibility that Trott's evidence might hold water, that he might perhaps be able to prove to all that he, Andrew, had no right to the name he bore or to the fortune he controlled, had kept him silent when he desired to respond to the promptings of his better nature. Those years had been filled with hideous fear. They were past; the fear was gone, but not the memory of the suffering he had endured day after day, month after month. George Gordon was responsible for much of this suffering; how forgive George Gordon?

And what of Richard and Priscilla Gray?

To-day as they watched Lily now walk across the fields by her husband's side they were happy indeed in her joy.

The pleasant picture of this wedded life would, both Richard and his sister knew, arrest the eye and hold the ear of many who look and long for happiness in vain, not knowing wherein it lies. Man must have joy. It is his native air, and where should he find it so perfect and perpetual as in his home?

It was still some hours before the sun would release the earth from the day's embrace and Mr. Gray spoke wistfully as he watched Lily turn and wave a cheery good-by. "Lily and Andrew," he said, "have truly a wonderful work to do and they will do it in part by

being so happy in their love. Each will leave the other free; each will hold the other up; and their gratitude will grow as, year by year, they see their little Joan unfold God's holy purpose in an atmosphere of love reflected by them all. Such love as that can never die; such love as that is God's best gift to men and women while on earth."

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Richard rose, and as he walked slowly away Priscilla watched him, until he passed beyond her sight round the head of the white may hedge. "Soon," she said softly, "he will understand."

Yes, right soon Richard Gray will understand.

He paused now on the sloping lawn, watching the little trout stream, when suddenly Gabriel Grand parted the boughs of a willow-tree and stood there before him, but on the further side of the brook. The heather, aglow with the glory it had culled from the soft spring rain and the summer sun, was all around her feet and the fir-trees stood like sentinels about her path. She seldom wore a hat when passing through the woods and now Richard whispered to himself, "Surely it must be hours only that have passed since first we met."

She smiled when she saw him on the bank, and called to him to show her where the new stepping stones were placed.

"I will help you across," he said. "They are a little farther down, below the mountain-ash."

For a moment they stood together on the wide, flat stones, there in the middle of the stream. Gabriel looked first up, then down the stream, across the valley beneath her eye.

"How beautiful," she said, "our England is! Are we grateful enough for its years and years of peace?"

Richard did not answer because just then he could not speak. Great thoughts were thronging round his heart and beating in upon his brain.

Now they had crossed the brook, and Gabriel did not need his hand. "Shall we sit here?" she said. "It is not nearly time for tea."

"I will bring the chair into the sun; it is never too hot for you, I know."

That was all that Richard said, for still great thoughts were thronging around his heart and beating in upon his brain, while Gabriel was well content to watch the merry water at her feet and the shadows which fell through the pines, here toning the bosom of the bracken to a deeper gray with a message from the unshed tears of a passing cloud, there lifting the curved fronds to meet the sky, dyeing them with transparent blue and, here, with a silvered kiss from the sun.

Richard, watching her, was forced to let the great thoughts enter and rest within his heart, for at last he understood why he might never hope to marry Gabriel Grand, and he prayed perhaps the holiest prayer that a man may pray while yet on earth, for he understood quite suddenly that there are women whom no man may even wish to wed. Toilers they are on a voiceless deep, that innermost heart which is dumb in its pain; "fishers of men" whom the white Christ bids "Go search for the souls that are lost, go bind up the wounds of a world."

And what of Nana? Where was she? Did she not also rejoice in her Miss Lily's joy?

"My lamb!" and the faithful woman patted the little Joan's head while she brushed the soft curls across the child's brow. "Rest thee here, my dearie, rest thee here on Nana's lap, while she sings thee the songs thy mother so loves and tells thee how happy a place is home."

Thus Nana no longer feared a lone old age for she had learnt that Love's bestowals, though individual, are ever universal too.

CHAPTER XXXV

"TAKE OFF THY SHOES"

"I forgave thee all that debt . . . shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee?"—JESUS.

THERE are those who understand and love each other, men and women who have in their turn stood upon the mountain whereon to-day stands Andrew Young. At last he had heard, at last had heeded an oft-repeated call, which now came to him beclouded with the silence of a glory from on high, till prostrate before a power as yet unknown to him he beheld the beauty of that sisterhood which walks this earth of ours to-day, though few there be that see it — Meekness and Might, the soul of each close knit to the other's soul.

Slowly, like one dazed by light, he rose to receive within his heart some knowledge of that true humility without which no man can really love or live; and then, as the minutes sped and the hours hastened on, there entered the heart of Andrew Young a wonderful message from God. Was ever so mighty a power as this? With it upon his side fearlessly he faced the past, bent low, then lifted it on high, then laid it at the feet of God, for had not that wonderful word with its gentleness and grace transformed that past till lo! it became a thing new-born? This word of might

conceived in the womb of Love, does it not hold for man the way to everlasting life? Already its glory graced the future years of Andrew Young, for already he had learnt, taught by its wondrous power, to forgive a grievous wrong. Already he was sure that here and now a man may learn to bless even those that curse and to love his brother as himself, aye, and daily prove his love, though it may be silently.

What then is this mighty truth? Need any ask? It is written there from Bethlehem to Calvary. It lives in letters of love upon the Saviour's Cross. It took the Redeemer down to hell to preach to the spirits there. It breathes its holy benediction on each Resurrection morn. It is the inspiration of the Christian's life. It is the motive power which moves the Advocate's perpetual plea. It is the holiest thing the soul of man on earth can know, for it ever urges him to yield himself, if need arise, so that he may save the sinner and heal the sick — aye, and raise the very dead. What then is this mighty truth all made of light that lives upon the Bible page; that lives in the heart of man to-day; that stands, a great and noble reality, so far above its pitiful counterfeit, mere sympathy, that those who look at self scarce can recognize its presence in their midst? What name has mortal tongue that it can fittingly bestow upon this heaven-sent grace — meekness entwined with might, humility be-crowned with power, in very truth, a “compassion” *all divine?*

Andrew stood in silence by Lily's side. Was it the setting sun that bathed his face in light? Was it the sight of little Joan climbing the cherry-tree that filled

his eyes so full of love? Ah, Lily! look again, then bow your head to shade the soft dew in your eyes. Have you ever heard his voice so sweet before, have you ever known him seem so strong?

"Lily, I have lately learned a mighty truth; I have no enemies. Beloved, I have nothing to forgive. One gave himself for man long, long ago, a wonderful example, and ever pleads for each and all. Who and what am I to mete or measure judgment to another? Who and what am I to dare to criticize a brother whose sin may be far less than mine? Nay, Lily, there is nothing to forgive. George Gordon needs my pity and my aid. The Father's love is universally bestowed, and 'each separate child of God is beautiful' when seen as God sees man, while Christ alone may bear a Saviour's name."

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Gabriel awoke with the coming sun's first rays and dressing left her room. Passing down the stairs and entering the ball-room, she opened the shutter at the farther end. She stood now on the balcony and looked on the walled garden which she loved the best of all. But presently she felt that she must be there, closer to the cloud of blossom on the apple-trees and the old-world flowers which grew almost where they would. For a long time she paced the paths and saw the spiders' webs lose something of the splendor they had borrowed from the moisture in the air and the sunshine from above. Here upon the eastern side the garden rose a good ten feet or more and Gabriel stood where she could see the countryside for miles around: misty tree tops, mingling with the coming blaze of a hot spring day, and here beneath her eye the unspeak-

able peace of English meadowland where cattle browsed contentedly and taught man that which he is slow to learn — silent lessons of patience and of calm. In the apple-tree above her head a faithful family of wrens built year by year, while upon the boughs of the wild elder-bush a pair of blue-tits preened their wings. Black-caps rested on the hazel hedge, and the little sparrow, least afraid of man, ran boldly to and fro. The air was full of song and the earth was rich with promise on every side.

Suddenly Gabriel knelt and searched amid the green leaves at her feet. Years ago she had journeyed to the Vosges and had captured the flower that John had loved so well. At first it had not taken kindly to its English home, but finally it had answered to the care which cherished it. Now the tiny buds were there and a single flower fully blown.

She rose and held the soft petals to her lips, while her thought flew back to the life of John, and the day when first his path had crossed her own.

“John,” the whisper seemed to fill her steadfast heart. “John, we always were and will be friends. Dear, can I ever thank God half enough for all that you have done for me?”

Then like a mighty force all made of light there swept across her soul a wave of passionate gratitude to God, as thought spanned back nearly two thousand years and suddenly removed for her something of that covering cast upon all people, the veil spread over every nation, till mortal thought lost finite form in the understanding of collective man, and that which ever individual must yet be universal too, shone forth before her mental gaze and proclaimed its name as “Won-

derful." Thus may the new birth come to mortal man; thus does he bow before Omnipotence and learn to love, as he has never loved before, Jesus, the friend of sinners, Christ, "the Lamb of God." Thus shall he learn to sigh and sorrow no more, but rise to rest in the bosom of God, knowing the Father because he has learnt to love the Son, at peace with man because aware of man's divinity, at one with God because forever reconciled to Good.

Gabriel stood now on the topmost stone that headed the balcony stair. Behind her and upon either side the old house rose in a great gray pile, for patient workmen had laid foundations strong and deep and raised a tower to the right and left. Before her for many miles the English landscape lay, here a meadow as yet unplowed, here a field in which the tares and wheat grew side by side; and there across the valley a high white light of promise burst upon her view, where an orchard bared its bosom to the sun and whispered sweetest hopes of a rich harvest later on. Gabriel took the blossom's message to her heart and scanned the future with a soul at rest, while she thought again of the Nazarene.

"Was ever so hallowed a meekness, was ever such wondrous might? He who washed his students' feet, the vanquisher of sin and death! Need any fear to tread where he has trod? What though it mean the same long journey all the way from Bethlehem unto Jerusalem right up the hill "without the gates"? Aye, what though it mean the lonely vigil on the mountain-side and the same wild fury on the morrow? Shall any fear as Peter feared? Could any bear," and now her head bowed low as swift tears gathered in

her eyes, “could any bear what Peter bore when his Lord, his Master, and his Friend, turned to look at him? Dear Christ,” she spoke aloud though very softly and to her heart alone, “take me, cleanse me, prove me, hold me ever by thy side, till I grow worthy to receive Love’s message for the tired heart of man. Thus only may I hope to help it rise and rest in Good. Having first learned to love my brother better than myself, thus shall I one day learn truly to love the God I have not seen.”

Now Gabriel knelt and the soft breeze blessed her as it passed her by and heard the answer to that silent prayer wherein true words are molded into deeds, and man knows even as he is known, for he has seen God as He is and spoken to Him face to face.

Now David stood for a moment close by at the open door. The day was so young that they two were alone in the world, it seemed.

“Alma Mater,” he whispered, while bending he rested his lips on her hair, “stay here while the organ speaks of that which must shortly be, nay, already has come to pass — a mental realm of pure delight and actual happenings, where the life of man is free from fear, where the life of woman is free from pain, where right is always right and wrong is always wrong; no compromise is there, no black is painted white, no white is painted black — a mental realm of actual happenings, wherein age is no longer crowned with the sorrow of decrepitude, but dons instead the greatness of a grand maturity; where youth no longer pleads a plaint of ignorance to cover folly or to cover sin, but boldly seeks its right to reason and to know — a mental realm of pure delight, where child and man may fight to-

gether the battle of life standing ever hand in hand, each holding the other up."

"Yes," Gabriel answered softly. "Then, David, make the organ speak of that holier, higher height whereon man roams quite free, aye, and woman too," the heart of man all cleansed from dross, the heart of woman pure as gold—a mental realm of actual happenings, where friendship holds full sway, for there man looks into his brother's eyes and never is afraid; for there all speak aloud of Love, nor drag the name of God upon the earth, nor need to whisper it with glance askance, nor can they mingle it with hate; for there Love robes itself in robes of spotless white, nor can be decked in scarlet hue, nor fear nor shame can enter there. Yes, David, let the organ speak of that which truly must be—a city, made of holy citizenship, wherein none fears to call the other friend, all knowing their King to be Love. Aye, let the organ speak of that which truly is—a beautiful realm of the real, where men and women love to-day as always the angels have loved."

So David sat at the organ and thanked his God again for all that Gabriel Grand had done for him, then thought of the things that must be till he too lost sight of finite form and viewed that mountain-top whereon the traveler rests at peace; for there Love waits to crown the one who overcometh with the diadem of immortality; for there man knows himself at last to be that which he always has been, co-heir with Christ, inheritor of harmony.

*Still, still with Thee when purple morning breaketh,
When the tired waketh, and the shadows flee,
Fairer than morning, lovelier than daylight,
Dawns the sweet consciousness, I am with Thee.*

*Alone with Thee, amid the seeming shadows,
The solemn hush of being, newly-born,
Alone with Thee, in breathless adoration,
In the calm dew and freshness of the morn.*

*So shall it ever be in that bright morning,
When Divine sense bids every shadow flee,
And in that hour, fairer than daylight dawning,
Remains the glorious thought, I am with Thee.*

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE, alt.

The world is waking as it wakes in May. Sweet sounds rush forth upon the air as though each songster sought to say, "Who shall praise Him most?" The dew lingers yet a little longer on the many-bladed grass, while a thousand thousand individual things rise up to greet the good. Each daisy spreads abroad its silver wings and woos to its bosom the sun. Man alone sleeps on.

Nay, away there among the green and gold of an affluent spring, in that distant meadow on an eastern slope, where the foxgloves grow so tall and the great oaks hold their own, a man's measured footfall presses the meek grass down. Now he bares and bows his head

while holding silent commune with his God. What have those nights of vigil laid within his arms? — A cross to kiss. What have those years of upward longing placed upon his brow? — A crown of crowns. Now it seems his figure is more tall, his form more broad, more strong; or is it only that he stands upright as though to face and fight a world? What is this diadem that crowns his brow? What but a wondrous calm? What is this holiness of prayer and praise that shines forth from his eyes? Has he indeed beheld "the Lord high and lifted up"? Has indeed a seraphim winged its way from God to man and rested a live coal on his lips, burning the dross away? What is this whispered word which leaves those lips anon and floods the day with light? A word of mighty import it must be that lifts the heart of man from earth to heaven yet . . . bids him wait a while and serve his brother-man.

"Abba, Father."

Whence comes this adoration of a world?

Has heaven indeed bent down to earth and left a soft caress on bird and bush, who in their turn have sped the message on? For see! the distant hayfields, many-hued, now bow their shadowy heads as though in silent worship of the Name of Names, while from every woodland tree, silver-throated it would seem, there comes an echo of the glad refrain. Thus doth silence, thus doth sound proclaim Love King of Kings.

Whence comes this adoration of a world?

A world awakes as it awakes in May, lit, it would seem, with living light and pregnant with the promise of a summer's joy. Heaven bends to earth and all

creation rises up to greet the good, as from forest and from field up-swells the echo of a glad refrain.

There in the midst stands man, expectant and alone, whilst a universe unfolds beneath his feet, for lo! he sees those things as yet unseen, and as a mighty silence holds the world, he hears those things as yet unheard: "Four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree," while a voice from heaven saith, "Be still and know that I am God."

Now heart-throbs and natal-throes are one, for man awaits the Father's kiss. Behold him stand expectant and alone upon that firmament made all of Mind, while a Word of Words descends upon his soul, possesses it and ratifies eternal law, broods for a moment o'er him motionless, then wings its way to God yet . . . leaves upon his forehead a new name written and leaves within his close embrace . . . more work to do. Thus doth Man stand, complete and wonderful, alone with God.

"Abba, Father."

So let it be while men as angels chant a long Amen.

